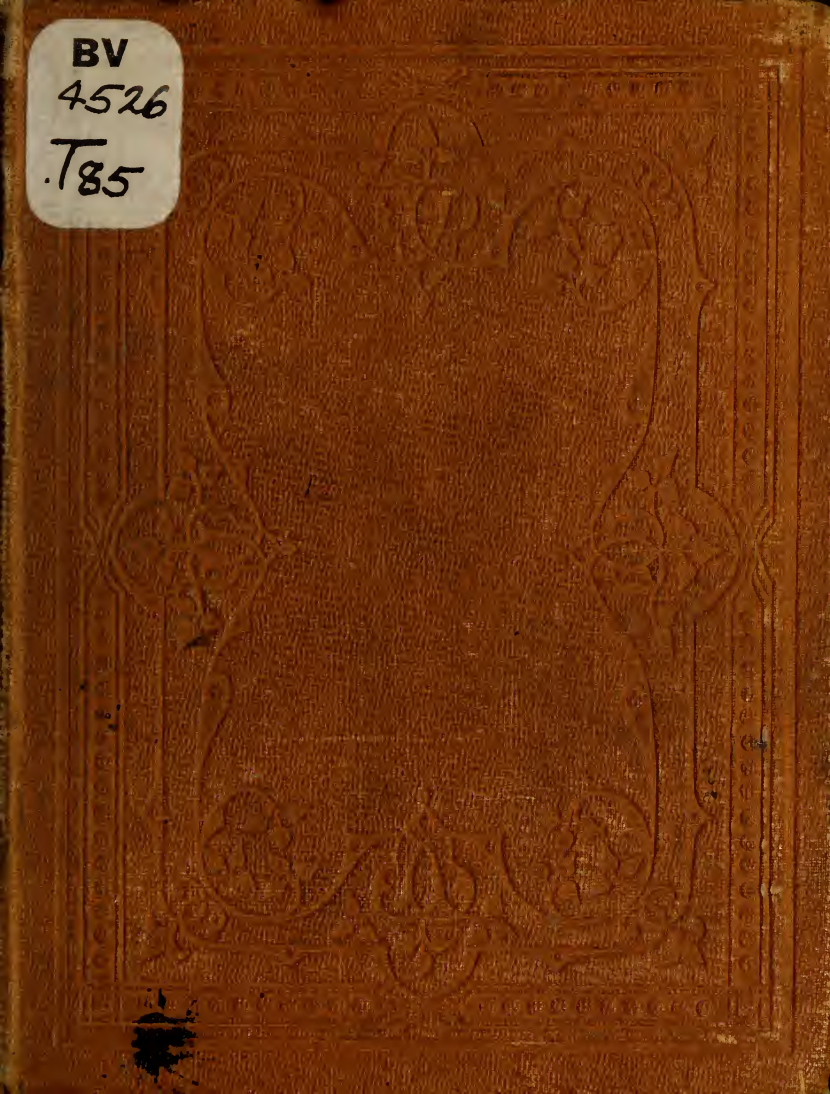


BV

4526

T85

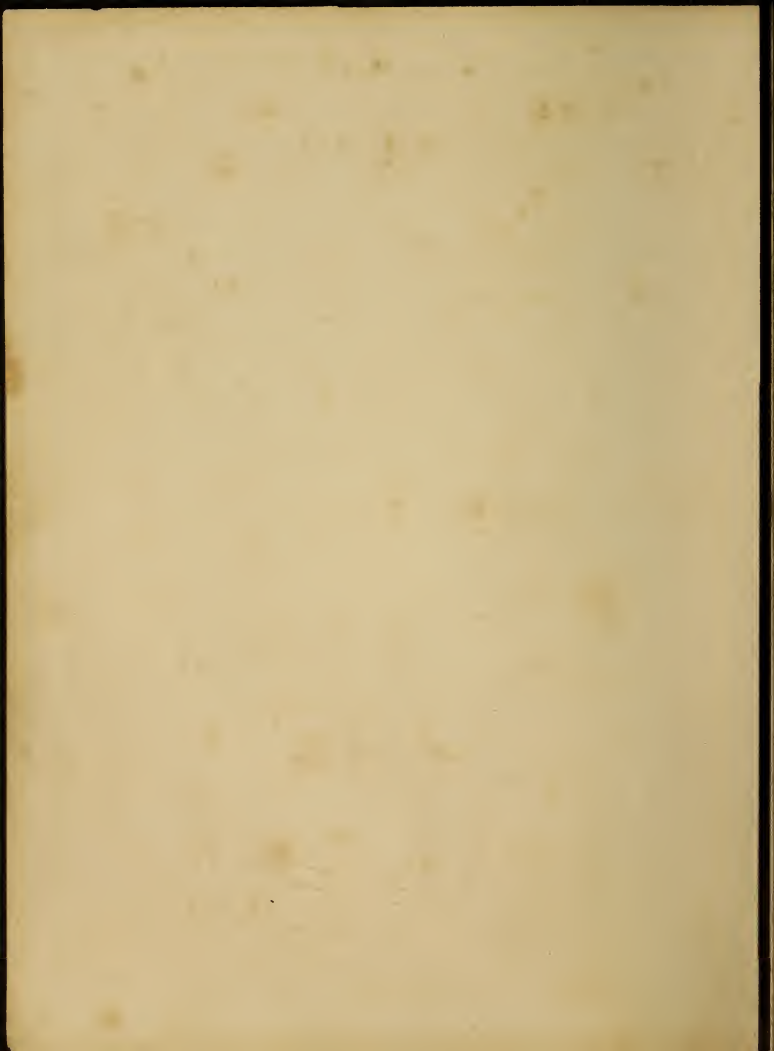


2196
13-10-16-1



Class BV4526
Book .T85

James Bennett.



THE FELLOW-TRAVELLERS:

OR,

MARRIED LIFE;

NOTICES OF THE DUTY, HONOUR, AND HAPPINESS

OF THAT STATE,

AND THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF THE PIOUS HUSBAND AND
WIFE IN THE HEAVENLY WORLD TO COME ;

WITH

Some Helps for Joint Devotion.

ALSO,

TWO FORMS OF INTERCESSION FOR RELATIVES

AT THE SEAT OF WAR.

Gerald Enslay
BY G. W. TYRRELL, M.A.

RURAL DEAN OF BELFAST, AND RECTOR OF DRUMBEG:

AUTHOR OF "THE RITUAL OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND
IRELAND ILLUSTRATED," AND FORMERLY
EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LATE BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE.

"Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above."—PARADISE LOST.

London:

RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE.

1855.

BV4526
.T85

LONDON:
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

Exchange
Western Ontario Il.
3/12/37

TO HER

WHOSE HEART, BY JOINT PRAYER AND HEAVEN-DIRECTED

CONVERSE,

HAS BECOME INTERWOVEN WITH MY OWN,

AND WITH WHOM,

THROUGH THE MERITS OF THE CRUCIFIED,

I CHERISH, IN PROSPECT, A SWEET AND ETERNAL RENEWAL

OF THAT ENDEARED COMPANIONSHIP,

IN WHICH, DURING OUR EARTHLY SOJOURN,

WE WERE SO BLESSED,

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

"Hearts that share
. . . . hopes of bliss beyond the tomb."

Barton.

This holy book
Marked with the seal of high divinity,
On every leaf bedew'd with drops of love
Divine, and with the eternal heraldry
And signature of God Almighty stamped,
From first to last, this ray of sacred light,
This lamp, from off the everlasting throne,
Mercy took down, and in the night of Time
Stood, casting on the dark her gracious bow.
Course of Time.

INTRODUCTORY.

“HOLY Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.”—*Article VI.*

“Holy Scripture is the storehouse of heavenly wisdom . . . if it will require to give good counsels, to comfort, to exhort, all these things

we may learn plentifully of the Holy Scripture.”—*Homily I.*

In acknowledgment of this established principle of our great Reformers, I place prominently forward the passages of the Old and New Testaments which treat of Married Life, adding an enlargement upon the sacred text, or a Commentary; and subjoining notes, original, and from writers whose names are given.

This mite is cast into the Lord's treasury with prayer that it may induce deeper attention to the matrimonial obligations, and thereby promote piety and happiness in families. The last part consists of devotional forms for the joint private worship of the married pair.

G. W. T.

CONTENTS.

PART I.—THE OLD TESTAMENT.

SECTION I.

	PAGE
THE PSALMS	3—11
Description of the book. Its authors. Meaning of the titles prefixed to several Psalms. The 128th Psalm	3—6
In proportion to the influence which religion has upon a man, he will be truly happy. Amongst the blessings promised to the pious servant of God, a chief source of comfort and delight arises from a wife and family.	
Beautiful and appropriate imagery to set forth this	6—8
Eastern manner of blessing the newly-married pair.	
<i>Note.</i>	7
Bp. Patrick's translation of the last verse. Opinion of Hengstenberg	8, 9
Jeremy Taylor's felicitous comparison between a married and a single life	10
Perverted interpretation, in the Douay Version, of expressions in this Psalm	11

SECTION II.

	PAGE
THE PROVERBS	12—26
This book shows the minuteness of our Christian obligations. Its authors. Its sense and its sentences not as in other portions of Holy Writ, but unconnected together. Notices of married life interspersed throughout it	12—16
Valuable commentary upon it by Bridges	<i>Note.</i> 15
The husband to be cheerful and happy in his wife's society. The loveliness, dignity, and influence which religion imparts to the character. A wife, when prudent, pious, and affectionate, becomes her husband's highest ornament and a blessing to her children	16—18
The tender love of her husband, honouring her as the person whom God saw to be the fittest for him—a help meet for heaven	19
Such an one comes not, as earthly possessions, in ordinary course, but by special gift from God, and to be sought for in prayer to Him	<i>ib.</i>
The Christian maiden likewise will seek for godly discernment and direction	<i>Note. ib.</i>
The danger of marrying an irreligious person in hope of his or her future conversion	<i>Note.</i> 18, 19
Bp. Beveridge's resolution. Testimony of Sir Matthew Hale. The inspired Hebrew sage describes in affecting terms a foolish wife	20—22

	PAGE
Rash manner so general in entering upon the important connexion. Appeal to the Christian maiden. To the Christian youth	22, 23
Intimate converse of the Christian wife and husband about their eternal interests and prospects	24—26

SECTION III.

THE PROVERBS. Chap. 31, verse 10 to end	27—36
Supposed to be written either in the time of Hezekiah or during the captivity. Pleasing picture of married life. Quaint pointed remarks of Matthew Henry and Dr. Durell	27, 28
Signification of the original word translated "virtuous."	Note. 28
A wise and godly matron described. Her skill, prudence, and active management. The full confidence and respect evinced by her husband. Her courteous and seasonable consideration for the poor. Her gentle kindness of speech. Her sound discernment	28—32
She receives praise from her children, from her husband, from God	34
Quotation from the Art Journal respecting embroidery. Hooker's funeral sermon for his "virtuous gentlewoman;" and Taylor's for Lady Carbery. Notes.	31—33

SECTION IV.

	PAGE
ECCLESIASTES	37—46
This portion of sacred Eastern philosophy most valuable to us. Noble precept in the twelfth chapter. Statement of a future existence in the seventh verse .	37—39
Professor Stowe's ingenious view of the book. <i>Note.</i>	38
Chap. ix. 7—11. Remarks on ancient wines; on the term "merry." Illustration of the nature of Christian joy, from the Book of Nehemiah, the Acts, and the Epistles to Philippi and Thessalonica. Peace and joy the believer's duty and privilege. Solitary life or affected austerity not required of him . . .	39—42
Solomon's own ill-success in meeting with female excellence accounted for. His remark upon it not that of a peevish censor, but of an humbled penitent. In the society of a faithful wife a man's happiness is increased and his anxieties soothed	42, 43
Beautiful the scene of a family living in peace and affection. Counsels of Barnes; of Livermore. <i>Notes.</i>	43—45
Wise and pious admonition of the enlightened monarch	44—46

PART II.—THE NEW TESTAMENT.

SECTION I.

	PAGE
THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS . . .	50—61
Character of the author. Nature and style . . .	50
Present state of religion at Ephesus and the surrounding country	<i>Note. ib.</i>
Chap. v. 22. The surpassing honour put upon marriage by introducing it as a pattern of the greatest Divine mercies. The mind directed in this the dearest natural connexion to the most precious of our spiritual . . .	51
Nature of the wife's submission. Wisdom of the Divine rule. Dr. Eadie. Bp. Wilson . . .	<i>Notes. 52, 53</i>
Christ's love to us the magnet to constrain the affections and influence the conduct. The Apostle's counsels enlarged	55
"Sanctify with the washing of water by the word." Various opinions upon this. The atonement. Its legal influence. Its moral influence . . .	<i>Note. 56—58</i>
Union of the spiritual Husband and His bride. Christ the grand pattern for imitation	61

SECTION II.

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS . . .	62—66
Its object. Striking similarity between it and the Epistle	

	PAGE
last considered. The wife's obedience limited: it is not prescribed to the husband, to exact obedience, <i>but to love</i>	62—66
Power of Christianity in softening the husband's character and in elevating the wife's. Quotations from Prof. Brown, Bps. Daniel Wilson and Jeremy Taylor.	
	Notes. 63, 64
From Archbishop Sumner	65

SECTION III.

THE FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER . . .	67—82
Distinguishing traits in the Apostle's character. No superiority granted to him, briefly shown; yet, in one respect, a peculiar honour conferred upon him. Characteristics of his writings	67, 68
This Epistle how described by Archbishop Leighton	68, 69
Chap. iii. Directions to Christian wives. Their behaviour of importance to the advancement of true religion. Their main ornaments not what pleases man, but the Lord	69—74
Observations from M'Ghee	Note. 69, 70
The rule respecting "adorning" to be understood in a limited sense	Note. 70
Archbishop Leighton's and Professor Brown's remarks.	
	Note. 73
The example of Sarah proposed	74

APPENDIX TO SECTION III.

	PAGE
Counsels to one of the parties, when the other is still uninfluenced by religion. Professor Brown . . .	76—82

SECTION IV.

THE FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER, Chap. iii.— <i>continued</i>	83—95
Important claims of a wife upon her husband. She is less adapted to bear the storms of life. His office to cherish and support her	83—87
Being fellow-heirs of life eternal, they will “speak often one to another” of their animating hopes; will frequently unite in prayer	87—89
Brown’s construction of “giving honour to the wife,” &c. Archbishop Leighton’s beautiful observations. <i>Note.</i>	83—86
The married couple will avoid every thing which would become a hindrance to the acceptance of their united prayers	89, 90
Dr. James’ comment upon this <i>Note.</i>	90—93
Jeremy Taylor’s striking illustration	93—95

SECTION V.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS	95—106
Titus, who he was: his mission to Crete. Object of this letter	96

	PAGE
Chap. ii. 4. Directions to Christian wives and mothers.	
The several terms illustrated	96—103
Present state of Crete	96
Affecting appeal of Mr. Slade	99, 100
A minister to be "the husband of one wife." Meaning of this. Observations of Conybeare and Howson.	
Shrewd remark of Barnes	103—106

SECTION VI.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS	107—118
Its origin. Former condition of Corinth. Its present one	107
Chap. vii. Cases upon which the Apostle's opinion had been solicited, with his replies	108—110
Statements of our Lord respecting polygamy and divorce, as related by St. Matthew and St. Mark. <i>Note.</i>	108, 109
Declarations of St. Paul in this chapter compared with other portions of his writings	110
Absurdity consequent on the Douay rendering of a pas- sage in this Epistle <i>Note. ib.</i>	
Prophecy which applies with crushing force to the Church of Rome. Rev. xiv. 4 may refer to idol wor- ship; more probably however to freedom from impu- rity	112, 113
A decree of the Council of Trent showing the views of the Papacy respecting marriage. Reason of this, ac- cording to the historian of the Council <i>Note.</i>	112

PAGE

Admonition in the 29th verse of this chapter a suitable conclusion for these notices of Married Life . . .	115
Solemn allusion in the Marriage Service. The proper effect of keeping it in mind will be to act in the anticipation of blissful and eternal reunion. Those only by whom such hope can justly be cherished. <i>Note.</i>	117, 118

PART III.

Address to the married pair. Divine honour conferred upon marriage. The feelings with which it should be entered into	121, 122
The purposes of God in the ordinance	122
Statement in the prophecy of Malachi <i>Note. ib.</i>	
The practice of joint private devotion by husband and wife. Archbishop Leighton's remarks upon it; approved by the Reformers; by subsequent writers . . .	123
Yet no forms extant for the purpose. Incident which gave rise to those now supplied	124, 125
Affectionate invitation to the married	127
Bishop Hall, Jeremy Taylor quoted <i>Note.</i>	128
Extract from "The Matrimonial Crown," an old and scarce work. Counsels concerning joint private worship	130—134

SECTION I.

	PAGE
Several forms to assist the married pair in their joint private devotions	135

SECTION II.

Forms of intercession on behalf of their children	. 172
---	-------

APPENDIX.

Two forms of intercession on behalf of relatives at the seat of war	184
--	-----

SECTION I.

THE PSALMS.

IN these lyrics of Israel's sweet singers are disclosed the most hidden and hallowed feelings of the saints of old: they are rich in the production of impassioned genius, set forth with all the graces of eastern minstrelsy. Religion is exhibited in its most engaging form, and all creation's charms employed to describe the glories of redeeming love.

Some were written by Asaph, Ethan, and Heman, eminent leaders of the temple choir, "who were moved by the Divine afflatus not only to excel in music but also to indite sacred poetry;" but the greater part by David, the father of Hebrew melody, "who collected the scattered wild field flowers, and planted them as a royal parterre on Mount Zion¹;" they were used by him, and probably by

¹ Herder.

the few other monarchs who were men of piety, in the national worship: it was so without doubt in Hezekiah's reign. Some were composed during the Captivity, it is supposed by Jeremiah, and all were gathered into one book by Ezra ².

We can indulge in a passing allusion only to the beautiful observations of the Reformers, proving how highly they were valued by these holy men; we must also omit the eulogy of Basil, of our own Hooker, and the exquisitely tender preface of Bishop Horne.

The titles which are untranslated in our Version relate either to the instrument upon which they were performed, as "Neginoth, Nehiloth, Shushan," respectively signify a lute, a flute, a cymbal; or to the more ancient melody to the tune of which they were set: thus "Aijeleth Shahar" (Ps. xxii.) means "the hind of the early dawn;" "Jonath-elem-rechokim" (Ps. lvi.) "the mute dove among strangers." Some are entitled songs of degrees or ascents, from being chanted by the people as they stately repaired to their elevated city and temple

² See 1 Chron. xv. 16—23. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2 Chron. xxix. 30, and the Apocryphal Book of Eccclus. xlvii. 8. 10.

for the annual festivals, or as they returned from Babylon.

Psalm cxxviii. is one of these. As a poem it is said to bear considerable marks of skill and judgment. We learn from it how the Lord's favour makes a family happy, and that to obtain it we must live in His fear. "How various and fluctuating the objects upon which the perverse desires of this world are bent, the Lord preferreth before all riches the blessing of a valuable wife."

Calvin.

BLESSED IS EVERY ONE THAT FEARETH THE LORD ;

THAT WALKETH IN HIS WAYS.

Here the change of person, where the narrative of blessings attending the pious suddenly alters into an apostrophe, is allowed to be beautifully imagined :

FOR THOU SHALT EAT THE LABOUR OF THY HANDS :

HAPPY SHALT THOU BE, AND IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEE.

THY WIFE SHALL BE AS A FRUITFUL VINE BY THE SIDES OF THY HOUSE :

THY CHILDREN LIKE OLIVE PLANTS ROUND ABOUT
THY TABLE³.

BEHOLD, THUS SHALL THE MAN BE BLESSED
THAT FEARETH THE LORD.

THE LORD SHALL BLESS THEE OUT OF ZION:

AND THOU SHALT SEE THE GOOD OF JERUSALEM
ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE.

YEA, THOU SHALT SEE THY CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,

AND PEACE UPON ISRAEL.

"Godliness," says the Apostle, "is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. iv. 8.) Yes, truly; religion, whilst it teaches the duties of every relation, best insures the comfort of each: it promotes our interest in every respect; there is nothing really needed in this life which it does not promise, and it alone furnishes the certain promise of eternal bliss. In proportion as it occupies the

³ See Part ii. sect. v. That the righteous would have a numerous posterity, and that the Divine favour would be shown in blessings upon their children, appears from many other passages also, as Ps. cxxvii. Job v. 25. Prov. xvii. 6. Isa. liii. 10.

heart, making us delight in obeying God's will, we shall be happy. We will "muse upon all Thy works," O Lord, and acknowledge in all the enjoyments of life Thy bounteous loving-kindness!

In this psalm particular blessings are held out, to come to pass so far as they prove consistent with the Divine honour and the benefit of the individual: a faithful wife and a family advancing in holiness and prosperity are esteemed by the Holy Spirit as tokens of heavenly favour; and some of the most beautiful images in nature are employed to show the delight and comfort which they prove to the pious man; his wife, as a tender vine plant⁴,

⁴ The vine was regarded by the Jews as God's best gift. In every country it is highly prized: in the East they have different kinds of it trained on the houses bearing abundance of fruit. Frequent and familiar figures are employed by the Hebrew writers from plants thus SUSTAINED. Even in our cold clime it is a prolific plant. At Hampton Court there is a vine, the produce of which is kept expressly for the royal table, and a relative, who at my instance has made careful inquiry, writes from thence, that in the present year (1855) "it has 1600 bunches of grapes, and generally yields 1300 lbs. weight of fruit!" Roberts, in his "Oriental Illustrations," affirms that a priest in blessing a newly-married couple often says, "May you be like the trees Cama-Vally and Cat-Pagga-Thoru!" These are

requiring to be supported and cherished, becoming by its beauty, its fragrance, and its clusters, the ornament of his house; plenteous in offspring, but still more so in wisdom and piety; the children as olive branches⁵, wild by nature, but trained up with parental care, grafted into the good olive, and partakers of its fruitfulness and valuable qualities.

The pious man may cherish the comforting hope of transmitting holy principles and habits to his descendants of the third generation. Bishop Patrick translates the verse, "Mayest thou live to see prosperous times and a thriving offspring, and enjoy a good old age," and says that it was a wish or a prayer used at the celebration of marriages, a form of desiring happiness to the new-married couple; but Professor Hengstenberg considers it a post-exile psalm referring to the particular state of

said to grow in the celestial arbour, and are joined together; the Cama-Vally, being parasitical, cannot grow without the other.

⁵ The olive is a beautifully green and spreading tree, yielding rich and valuable fruit, and the young sprouts grow up in graceful circuit from the roots of the older trees, which renders the allusion to it here peculiarly appropriate.

the Jewish Church. The substance of his remarks is as follows:—

The God-fearing Israel is personified, as in Lamentations (chap. iii.). In the time of distress the fear of God appeared to be deprived of its reward, and an antidote against this notion is here supplied, upon which the 8th of Zechariah, setting forth the restoration of Jerusalem, may be regarded as a commentary. Happy is the fearer of God for consolation amid circumstances which seem loudly to declare the contrary: "Fear ye not, let there be no failings in you: God never fails: perform faithfully thy part, and thus shall the rich blessing of God be renewed every morning." A numerous and flourishing posterity is promised to the apparently decaying nation, and what is promised in the ideal person of God-fearing Israel must take effect in a multitude of particular individuals.

But whichever of these opinions be adopted, we may repeat the inquiry of Scott, "Would language such as that of this psalm have been suggested to the inspired writers, had matrimony been a less holy or less happy state than celibacy?"

He who held Rome at bay,
And bulwarked Europe by his brave appeals,
Looks he less lofty to the hearts which love
The sterling and the true, when playful seen
In the mild sunshine of the married state ?

Luther.

On this Jeremy Taylor speaks with peculiar felicity of expression : " Here is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents, and the charity of relations ; here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre. Marriage is the nursery of heaven. The virgin sends up prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to Him ; but the state of marriage fills up the number of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society and the union of hands and hearts : it hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life ; it hath more care, but less danger ; it is more merry and more sad, is fuller of sorrows and fuller of joys ; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strength of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful."

How influential the sympathy of an affectionate

wife, when her heart is renewed by heavenly grace, to support and cheer under more than ordinary trials, we have practical testimony in the life of Weitbrecht, the eminent missionary in Bengal, who, writing home an account of the various difficulties which he had to encounter, expresses himself thus:—"The roughnesses of my course are much smoothed by one who makes the bitter sweet and lightens my difficulties by her active participation of them, and we daily pray that we may love each other in Jesus."

The Douay version of the Romanists escapes all difficulties against their compulsory systems that might arise from this psalm, by interpreting its passages in this way: "Thy wife shall be a fruitful vine; thy soul shall bring forth many meritorious works; thou shalt see thy children's children; thou shalt have reward in heaven for good works done upon earth!" Is not this a daring perversion of the WRITTEN WORD, an instance from many of the undeviating practice of their Church to neutralize that Word by tradition, whenever it runs counter to their errors?

SECTION II.

THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

THESE are the "winged words" of inspired sagacity, basing itself on extended observation, and on a wide and varied experience. Whilst other parts of Scripture show us the glory of our high calling, this book instructs us how to walk worthy of it. Elsewhere we learn our completeness in Christ, and justly do we glory in our high exaltation as "joint-heirs with Him," in virtue of our close union with Him admitted to exalted honours even now, and by anticipation "made to sit together in heavenly places:" In this book we see the minuteness of our Christian obligations; that there is not a look, a word, a movement, the most important action of the day, the smallest relative duty, in which we do not either deface or adorn the image of our LORD and the profession of His name.

Of the last seven chapters the first five were written by Solomon and edited some centuries after by the royal scribes in the reign of Hezekiah; the two last were written by separate hands, and altogether worthy of the place which they hold in the sacred canon.

“We are not generally to expect any connexion either of sense or of sentences in this book,” observes Bishop Hopkins. “Other parts of the inspired volume are like a rich mine, where the precious ore runs along in a continual vein; but this is like a string of pearls, which, though they are loose and unstrung, are not therefore less excellent and valuable.” The remark holds good, as in other points, so also in the notices of married life, which are not given uninterruptedly, but occur at intervals throughout. Brought together here, they teach that

A man should be happy in the companionship of an affectionate wife. If a person of prudence and piety, she will contribute to his honour, will herself retain universal respect, and will promote the permanent happiness of the family. She should therefore be esteemed as the Lord’s express gift to those

whom He favours, to be obtained by earnest prayer. Those who are thus blessed will in grateful return set forth the glory of the gracious Giver. There is, then, set before us the affecting contrast.

REJOICE WITH THE WIFE OF THY YOUTH.

LET HER BE AS THE LOVING HIND AND PLEASANT ROE¹;

LET HER ENDEARMENTS SATISFY THEE AT ALL TIMES ;

AND BE THOU RAVISHED (enraptured) ALWAYS WITH HER LOVE.—PROV. v. 18, 19.

A GRACIOUS WOMAN RETAINETH HONOUR².—xi. 16.

¹ The pathetic story of the ewe lamb (2 Sam. xii. 3) will here occur to the mind. The hind and roe were objects of special joy and endearment (Canticles ii. 17, and iii. 5), a picture of the lively delight which the wife naturally engages, relaxing in her society from severer duties, and taking the liveliest pleasure in her company. As Bishop Davenant beautifully observes, "Abroad the man may consider himself tossing upon the waves, but at home with his wife, in repose, as in a desired haven."

² Thus Deborah retained honour as a mother in Israel, the counsellor and stay of a declining people; Esther retained influence over a heathen husband for the nation's benefit. And still the gracious woman retaineth honour long after she is

A VIRTUOUS WOMAN IS A CROWN TO HER HUSBAND :

BUT SHE THAT MAKETH ASHAMED IS AS ROTTENNESS IN HIS BONES.—xii. 4.

EVERY WISE WOMAN BUILDETH HER HOUSE :

BUT THE FOOLISH PLUCKETH IT DOWN WITH HER HANDS.—xiv. 1.

WHOSO FINDETH A WIFE FINDETH A GOOD THING,
AND OBTAINETH FAVOUR OF THE LORD.—xviii.
22.

THE CONTENTIONS OF A WIFE ARE A CONTINUAL
DROPPING.

mingled with the dust: Sarah, the obedient wife; Hannah, the consecrating mother; Lois, Eunice, and the elect lady in the family sphere; Phœbe and her companions in the annals of the Church; the poor widow who so richly contributed to the temple; the self-denying lover of her LORD; Mary in contemplative retirement; Dorcas in active usefulness: are not these names held in honourable remembrance?

For the rich contribution of these notes, as also for the most of what is not original in this section, I am indebted to the Commentary of Bridges. In venturing to hope that my volume may obtain approval of a "scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," I would crave indulgence for some alterations, whereby his valuable remarks fall in more readily with my immediate purpose.

HOUSE AND RICHES ARE THE INHERITANCE OF FATHERS :

AND A PRUDENT WIFE IS FROM THE LORD.—xix. 13, 14.

IT IS BETTER TO DWELL IN A CORNER OF THE HOUSETOP,

THAN WITH A BRAWLING WOMAN IN A WIDE HOUSE.—xxi. 9.

FOR THREE THINGS THE EARTH IS DISQUIETED,
* * * *

FOR AN ODISIOUS WOMAN WHEN SHE IS MARRIED.
—xxx. 21. 23.

Husband ! “ REJOICE WITH THY WIFE ; ” count thyself happy with her ; be cheerful in her society ; cherish her with gentleness and purity ; guard against every thing which would interrupt that strictest harmony which should subsist between you. The tender well-regulated affection of this intimate relation is your defence against unbecoming desires ; yea, it is consecrated to the high purpose of shadowing out a great mystery, the love of Christ to the Church.

“ SHE RETAINETH HONOUR : ” what loveliness, dignity, and influence does religion impart to the

character ! She is known, not by outward beauty, but by appropriate inward ornaments which remain in full lustre when outward accomplishments have faded away. She wins her children, and it may be thyself her husband, into the paths of piety and holiness.

SHE IS "A CROWN" TO THEE ; faithful, reverently obedient, immovable in affection, delighting to see you respected and beloved, covering as much as may be your failings, prudent in household management, conscientious in discharge of domestic duties, kind to all around, and, as the root of all, fearing the LORD ;—such is the virtuous woman, "the weaker vessel" indeed, yet a woman of strength, governing her passions, and with all her graces in godly energy. She is not the ring on thy finger, nor the chain of gold around thy neck,—that were far too low ; she is thy CROWN ! thy highest ornament, attracting the eyes of all upon thee as one eminently honoured and blessed !

And further, she is a blessing not to thyself only as an individual, but "SHE BUILDETH HER HOUSE," establishes it in a firm and durable state, uniting economy with liberality, strict integrity with the

fear of God, instructs your children by example no less than by teaching; she educates them for eternity, not to shine in vain pageants of this world, but to "the glory of their Father which is in heaven."

Such "A WIFE IS A GOOD THING;" she alone has a right to that honourable title. If in a state of innocence it was "not good for man to be alone," much more in a world of care and trial are "two better than one" for mutual support and sympathy: the phrase "good thing" implies both godliness and also suitableness. Godliness is found when you "marry only in the LORD," with one who is a believer in and imitator of Him; the "unequal yoke with an unbeliever" is an awful anomaly³.

³ It may be objected to these expressions that they refer not to the marriage of a Christian with a nominal professor of Christianity, but with a heathen: wherein, however, is the difference? Are not both destitute of spiritual blessings, and is not the nominal professor, according to the denunciation of our Lord, in the more dangerous position of the two, seeing that he has heard the Gospel and slighted it? Christian youth or maiden, venture not on the dangerous experiment of becoming united to an irreligious person in the delusive hope of his or her conversion, for, in such cases, the conversion is often

Again, the good thing is when you honour your wife, not as the wisest and holiest woman, but as the person whom GOD saw to be the best and fittest for you, a comfort for life, a help for heaven. Thus she becomes the one object of your undivided heart; mutual faith is plighted in the LORD. Such a communion will spiritualize your affections, and elevate them from earth to heaven.

But how is this good thing to be found? Look for it, and you shall find it, as Isaac did, in answer to prayer. "Every good gift is from the Lord" (James i. 17), some in ordinary course, others more directly: thus, "houses and riches" are His gifts,

the other way: "the natural tendency of the heart," says Archbishop Sumner, "is to descend towards the earth, not to rise to God and heaven; and when a weight is attached to it, assisting this natural tendency, the fall is sure." Suffer not your affections to be interested in any one whose heart, so far as from GOD's word you can judge, is not given to Him; arrange not to lead a life of unsanctified enjoyment on earth with one of whom there is no well-grounded hope of sharing with you an eternity of hallowed happiness in heaven. Distrust your own judgment and affections; apply to the LORD, and He will grant you a discerning mind, and strengthen you by His Spirit to escape the treacherous and enticing snare.

they come by descent ; the heir is known, and in due course takes possession of his estate, and often does it descend to a worthless character ; but the "PRUDENT WIFE" is wholly unconnected with the man ; there has been no previous bond of relation ; she IS FROM THE LORD, a special gift of His choosing for those He favours, and therefore it will be obtained at His hand if sought for in earnestness and faith. The term "prudent," I should remark, implies not merely an efficient ruling of the household, but also that heavenly wisdom by which she becomes the joy and confidence of her husband⁴. Again, is not the husband, no less than the wife, "from the Lord?" Oh, let each one who thinks of

⁴ "I shall endeavour," is the pious resolve of Bishop Beveridge, "to make choice of such a woman for my spouse who hath first made choice of Christ as a Spouse for herself; that none may be made one flesh with me who is not made one spirit with Christ my Saviour; for I look upon the image of Christ as the best mark of beauty I can behold in her, and the grace of God as the best portion I can receive with her. These are excellencies which, though not visible to carnal eyes, are nevertheless agreeable to a spiritual heart: for my own part, they seem such necessary qualifications, that my heart trembles at the thought of ever having a wife without them."

entering into marriage, prospectively seek His blessing⁵, realizing the responsibility of the condition, counting it as a talent for God's service and glory!

Truly affecting is the contrast; fain would I pass over the miserable scene, dare I venture to withhold any portion of the whole counsel of God! Sharply does the inspired sage employ his powerful eloquence in denouncing with severe reproof the CONTENTIOUS WIFE, extravagant, imperious, through levity forgetting her due position and subjection; not resting satisfied with the regard of her husband, but seeking admiration from others; this is,

⁵ Sir Matthew Hale, Chief Justice of England, 1671, at the close of a long and arduous life, affirmed, "From my own experience I can testify that even in the external actions of my whole course, I was never denied the best guidance when in humble sincerity I implored the secret aid of divine wisdom." "His testimony," adds Dr. James, from whose treatise on Christian Watchfulness I have abridged the anecdote, "in itself valuable, becomes inestimable to confirm our faith and enliven our hope, when we look to the character of the witness, a man of extensive erudition, true philosophy, acute legal powers, and in times of unparalleled difficulty of character altogether unimpeached.

indeed, a living disease ; it is here depicted by unerring Wisdom as "ROTTENNESS IN HER HUSBAND'S BONES," marring his usefulness, undermining his peace, driving him, it may happen, into temptation and the snare of the devil. Mark "the FOOLISH WOMAN;" her idleness, wastefulness, love of pleasure, want of forethought and carefulness ; her children unrestrained, their souls neglected, their happiness ruined ! See "HER HOUSE PLUCKED DOWN" in confusion ; sad issue, if "an enemy had done this !" but it is the doing, or rather the undoing, of "HER OWN HANDS." In proportion to her power and influence is her capability of family mischief ; her ungoverned temper and tongue are sources of continual disquiet ; she who should be the choicest blessing becomes the piercing scourge. The intention of the divine ordinance is contravened through her means ; for it would seem "good for man to be alone," rather than his help meet should turn to his hindrance and his curse !

And how many bring this misery upon themselves ! They plunge on adventure into this important connexion, without thought on the duties to be done, the temptations to be avoided, the crosses to

be borne; they seek not for direction in the momentous choice; and yet if ever there was a matter for serious meditation it is this, as being linked with the highest interests of unborn generations. Here to err once may be the undoing of ourselves and of our house. Reflect of how little account are fortune, rank, outward accomplishments, compared with godly wisdom.

Christian maiden! ponder well, when contemplating this holy union, will you be A CROWN TO YOUR HUSBAND, OR ONE THAT MAKETH ASHAMED? Will you be what GOD made the woman, an help meet; or what Satan made her, a tempter to your husband? Forget not the beauty of graceful and ready concession, and that your glory is departed from you, should you lose "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," lovely in the sight of man, and, what is incomparably superior, "in the sight of GOD HIMSELF of great price."

Christian youth! in your claim for submission, bear in mind that it is A WIFE, not a servant, which you have found. Oh, let your mutual comfort be sought, where alone it can be solidly obtained, in dwelling together as "heirs of the grace of life!"

Better never to have seen each other, than to live together forgetful that your union is an indulgent gift of the LORD, to be made an instrument for His praise and your own eternal bliss.

My own beloved ! I dare call thee mine,
For Heaven hath given thee to me : chosen out
As we two are for blessing, ...
'Twere cold and barren gratitude
To stifle in our hearts the holy gladness.

Milman.

Mr. J. A. James has some good observations :—
“ Where both parties are unconverted, or only one of them is yet a partaker of true piety, there should be the most anxious, judicious, and affectionate efforts for their salvation. How heathenish a state is it to enjoy together the comforts of marriage, and then travel in company to eternal perdition ; to be mutual comforters on earth, and then mutual tormentors in hell ! and where both parties are real Christians, there should be the exercise of a constant reciprocal solicitude, watchfulness, and care, in reference to their spiritual and eternal welfare. One of the ends which every believer should propose to himself in entering the marriage state, is to

secure one faithful friend at least, who will be a helpmate for him in reference to another world, and to assist him in the great business of his soul's salvation, and that will pray with him and for him; one that with gentle humility will tell him of his defects; one that will stimulate and draw him by the power of a holy example and the sweet force of persuasive words; one that will warn in temptation, be a solace in dejection, and in every way assist in his pilgrimage to the skies. The highest end of the connubial state is lost, if it be not rendered helpful to our piety; and yet this end is too generally neglected even by professors of religion. Do we converse with one another on the high themes of redemption and eternal salvation? Do we study each other's dispositions, snares, troubles, decays in piety, that we may apply suitable remedies? Do we mutually open the state of our minds on the subject of personal religion, and declare our perplexities, our joys, our fears, our sorrows? Alas! who must not blush at their deficiencies in these particulars? And yet such neglect is criminal. Fleeing from the wrath to come, and yet not doing all we can to aid each other's escape! Contending

side by side for the crown of glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, and yet not doing all we can to insure each other's success! Is this love? Is this the tenderness of connubial affection?"

SECTION III.

THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

CHAP. xxxi. 10.

WE have here the pattern or ideal portrait suggested by the mother of Lemuel for his guidance in choice of a wife. It has been supposed that she was Abijah, daughter of the high priest Zechariah, and mother of King Hezekiah, and the conjecture is a probable one; on the other hand, the many Chaldee idioms in the original text would lead our thoughts to a later period.

This forms a sort of poem, composed with much skill, consisting of twenty-two verses, each beginning with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. By one writer¹ it is quaintly styled "the looking-glass for ladies to dress themselves by; and if so, their adorning will be found to praise and honour at the appearing of Jesus Christ;" and another

¹ Matthew Henry.

observes², "the picture is the most finished of all antiquity, drawn at full length, and equally pleasing in every point of view."

WHO CAN FIND A VIRTUOUS³ WOMAN ?

FOR HER PRICE IS ABOVE RUBIES.

THE HEART OF HER HUSBAND DOTH SAFELY
TRUST IN HER,

SO THAT HE SHALL HAVE NO NEED OF SPOIL.

SHE WILL DO HIM GOOD AND NOT EVIL

ALL THE DAYS OF HER LIFE.

SHE SEEKETH WOOL AND FLAX,

AND WORKETH WILLINGLY WITH HER HANDS.

SHE IS LIKE THE MERCHANTS' SHIPS,

SHE BRINGETH HER FOOD FROM AFAR.

² Dr. Durell in the Bible of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

³ Dr. Chalmers says, that the term virtuous is here used in the sense of the old Scottish, by which virtue and thrift are synonymous. With all due deference to such authority, I durst affirm that it includes still higher qualities; the original word implies both endowments of mind and good disposition. It occurs in two other places, where in each the import is gathered from the context: thus, in Exodus xviii. it denotes those who serve God and possess courage to lead a righteous life in a period when such a course is despised and ridiculed; and in Ruth iii. it stands for pity and unblemished reputation.

SHE RISETH ALSO WHILE IT IS YET NIGHT,
AND GIVETH MEAT TO HER HOUSEHOLD,
AND A PORTION TO HER MAIDENS.

SHE CONSIDERETH A FIELD, AND BUYETH IT:
WITH THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS SHE PLANT-
ETH A VINEYARD.

SHE GIRDETH HER LOINS WITH STRENGTH,
AND STRENGTHENETH HER ARMS.

SHE PERCEIVETH THAT HER MERCHANDISE IS GOOD:
HER CANDLE GOETH NOT OUT BY NIGHT.

How full and pleasing a description is here given of married life, of a wise, useful, and godly wife, in her domestic employments and duties! The firmness of resolution, the respectful submission to her husband, and, on the other hand, the entire confidence reposed by him in her fidelity, skill, and prudent management, satisfied that she will neither betray the trust, nor have any interest separate from his; and consequently he commits all his affairs to her charge: these are so vigilantly guarded, that there arises no temptation by indirect measures to increase his store. In all things she acts for his benefit, carefully avoiding aught which might tend to injury.

And now is presented to us, in varied grandeur of expression, the particulars of her industry, for the most part peculiar to the simple age ere societies were formed of arts and trades, or foreign manufactures much known; her mental and bodily energies, the lucrative nature of her traffic, from reliance on her punctuality and integrity; the judicious precaution in burning a nightly lamp when predatory incursions were not uncommon;

SHE LAYETH HER HAND TO THE SPINDLE,
AND HER HANDS HOLD THE DISTAFF.

SHE STRETCHETH OUT HER HAND TO THE POOR;
YEA, SHE REACHETH OUT HER HANDS TO THE
NEEDY.

SHE IS NOT AFRAID OF THE SNOW FOR HER
HOUSEHOLD:

FOR ALL HER HOUSEHOLD ARE CLOTHED WITH
DOUBLE GARMENTS.

SHE MAKETH HERSELF COVERINGS OF TAPESTRY;
HER CLOTHING IS OF SILK AND PURPLE.
HER HUSBAND IS KNOWN IN THE GATES,
WHEN HE SITTETH AMONG THE ELDERS OF THE
LAND.

SHE MAKETH FINE LINEN, AND SELLETH IT;

AND DELIVERETH GIRDLES TO THE MERCHANT.

All this diligence proceedeth not from covetousness; she is "full of good works and almsdeeds;" "SHE STRETCHETH OUT HER HAND TO THE POOR" and afflicted; a figure significant of her seeking them out, of her consideration for their necessities and sorrows, and rendering seasonable aid with cheerful courteousness, so that the blessing of them that were ready to perish came upon her.

Next have we the attire of herself and household; the tapestry, embroidered quilts⁴, and carpets

⁴ The following remarks are abridged from the Art Journal :— Women in all ages have indulged the natural love of ornament by practising fancy work and embroidery for the person or the dwelling. The Orientals, especially the Turks, excel in it to this day. In the history of India it is related that Nour Mahal, wife of the Emperor Jehanghire, during seven years that she was neglected by him, supported herself by sale of her embroidery. In our own country, too, spinning and weaving were once royal occupations. The Bayeux tapestry, so much valued by archæologists for its representations of the manners of the age, is said to have been the work of Matilda, queen of William I., and her maidens. Specimens still exist of the skill of Catherine Parr, *surviving* queen of Henry VIII. An illustration copied from an old French MS. represents a queen seated at a loom and in the act of throwing the shuttle, while one of

of the mansion ; suitable to her station as wife of a public officer known and honoured in the places of judicial proceedings.

STRENGTH AND HONOUR ARE HER CLOTHING ;
AND SHE SHALL REJOICE IN TIME TO COME.
SHE OPENETH HER MOUTH WITH WISDOM ;
AND IN HER TONGUE IS THE LAW OF KINDNESS.

Outward ornaments, we see, are not the principal decorations of this holy matron. "STRENGTH AND HONOUR," moral courage and resolution, under trials, added to unblemished reputation, "ARE HER CLOTHING, AND SHE SHALL REJOICE IN TIME TO COME." Yes, when the flesh and the heart fail, "she shall have comfort from on high;" for not alone adorns her a faithful discharge of active duties, but the gentler graces of "the hidden man of the heart." "SHE OPENETH HER MOUTH WITH WISDOM;" right judgment in worldly matters, still more so in spiritual, for she "FEARETH THE LORD." She gives sound, affectionate counsel; she yields not to anger; indulges not in censorious or sarcastic

her handmaidens is spinning with a distaff and spindle, as still practised by the Italian peasants.

remarks, but promotes the exercise of peace and love; for her tongue is ruled not by caprice, but by "the law of kindness," grace and mercy, the law of the LORD. By converse on the works and on the dealings of Jehovah, she proves that whilst the hands are engaged in earthly business, the heart and the hopes are mounting upwards towards heaven. Surely wisdom like this is inexpressibly charming and lovely ⁵!

⁵ It is probable, remarks Bridges, that Hooker, in his exquisite funeral sermon for his "virtuous gentlewoman," had this before his eyes when he enumerates among so many virtues "heartly devotion towards God; towards poverty, tender compassion; motherly affection towards servants; towards friends, serviceable kindness; mild behaviour and harmless meaning towards all."

Nor must I omit his notice of Jeremy Taylor's finely-drawn portrait of Lady Carbery: "If we look on her as a wife, she was chaste and loving, discreet and humble. If we remember her as a mother, she was kind and severe, careful and prudent; very tender, and not at all fond; a greater lover of her children's souls than of their bodies, and one that would value them more by their strict and proper worth than by their relation to herself. Her servants found her prudent and fit to govern, and yet openhanded and apt to reward; a just exalter of their duty, and a great rewarder of their diligence."

SHE LOOKETH WELL TO HER HOUSEHOLD,
AND EATETH NOT THE BREAD OF IDLENESS.
HER CHILDREN ARISE, AND CALL HER BLESSED;
HER HUSBAND ALSO, HE PRAISETH HER.
MANY DAUGHTERS HAVE DONE VIRTUOUSLY,
BUT THOU EXCELLEST THEM ALL.

With what firm, yet mild and hallowed influence is a guardian watch maintained over family and dependents, regulating their occupations and forming industrious habits! And now is there before us a delightful scene: the children, taught from tender age "to show piety at home," living proofs of sound instruction, by pattern no less than precept encouraged to walk in the path of holiness to the mansions of rest and glory; the children, growing up to maturity, express aloud their grateful sense of her untiring assiduity, her wise admonitions, her consistent example; they praise her, they invoke blessing upon her head: and the husband, appreciating the comforts acquired by her energy, and the peaceful home wherein his anxieties are soothed and his cares alleviated, out of the fulness of heart expatiates on her worth and extols her with affectionate eulogy, "MANY DAUGHTERS HAVE

DONE VIRTUOUSLY (worthily), BUT THOU EXCELLEST THEM ALL ! ”

FAVOUR IS DECEITFUL AND BEAUTY IS VAIN ;
BUT A WOMAN WHO FEARETH THE LORD, SHE
SHALL BE PRAISED.

GIVE HER OF THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS,
AND LET HER WORKS PRAISE HER IN THE GATES.

The favour of the world, whether publicly or in the communications of private life, is unstable and deceitful ; beauty of person is no sure indication of goodness within ; it exposes to danger ; it is, at best, a fading property ; but A WOMAN WHO FEARETH THE LORD, who neglecteth not “ the one thing ” pre-eminently “ needful,” who in conscientious fulfilment of ordinary daily duties striveth to “ adorn the doctrine of GOD her Saviour,” and in prayer seeketh His guidance and support, she shall have praise—praise that bids defiance to death itself—
THE PRAISE OF GOD !

Thy works and alms and all thy good endeavour
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod ;
But as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.

Love led them on, and Faith who knew them best,
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew, so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious thrones
Before the Judge, who thenceforth bid thee rest
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams ⁶.

Outward business, in our day, devolves upon the husband, and, except in the humbler ranks, unceasing toil is not required of females; thus is there more leisure at disposal for labours of love; for cheering the dwelling of sickness and sorrow; for contemplating the ways and works of Providence: and the Christian wife, observing with imitative eye the picture here delineated, will find no portion of time consumed in mere amusement, or in worldly pleasures, but the whole of it occupied to the glory of God and for the benefit of man.

Fly not the household task, the duteous care,
Each gladness heighten and each sorrow share:
Where pine the poor, be near thy help to lend;
Be thou thy brother's aid, thy server's friend;
With Martha's zeal, yet Mary's better part,
Walk thou within thy house with perfect heart.

⁶ The latter part of an enchanting sonnet by Milton on the religious memory of a Christian friend.

SECTION IV.

ECCLESIASTES.

IN this valuable portion of sacred oriental philosophy, Solomon resolves the question concerning the chief happiness of man ¹. He states the varied and powerful results of his own great experience, assuring us that no created good can satisfy THE SOUL, and that all earthly pursuits, unless they have reference to its interests, are vain and unsatisfying: and as the conviction of this must be a means, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, of leading the mind to Christ, we see in the book a gracious method to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Him ². The enlightened monarch

¹ A few expressions here and antecedently have been adopted from the Biblical Cyclopædia.

² Parts of the book are difficult to understand; and some have supposed it to be a dialogue or dramatic composition, senti-

and preacher concludes his masterly production with the noble precept—

ments of a sceptical nature being recited in order to be carefully confuted. Professor Stowe's view is so ingenious that I append it: "The method is the most vivid that can be imagined. Instead of describing the various processes of thought and feeling through which he passed in the course of his eventful life, the whole heart of the king is taken out and held up before our eyes, with every thing it contains, both good and bad. The secret chambers of his soul are thrown open, and we see every thought and feeling as it arises in the mind, and in the exact shape in which it first presents itself, without any of those modifications by which men soften down the harder features of their first thoughts before they give them utterance to their fellow-men. . . . Solomon, seeking happiness in the things of earth, is disappointed and disgusted; and instead of repenting of his errors, he becomes dissatisfied with the arrangements of Providence, misanthropic and sceptical. His conscience, however, is not entirely asleep, but occasionally interposes to check his murmurings and reprove his follies. In this state of mind he is introduced in the character of Choheleth [the Hebrew term for the Preacher, of which Ecclesiastes is the Greek], and gives full and strong utterance to his feelings. Hence inconsistent statements and wrong sentiments are occasionally to be expected in the progress of the discourse, and it is not till at the close of the book that all his errors are corrected, and he comes to 'the conclusion of the whole matter,' an humbled, penitent, believing, and religious man."

“ Remember thy Creator even in thy youth
Before the unhappy days arrive
Or the years approach,
When thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them.”

And after a faithful and affecting picture of the gradual advance of old age and death, he puts before us the consoling prospect of a future existence in the presence of God Himself.

“ Then shall the dust of the body return to the earth which it sprang from ;
The spirit itself shall ascend to dwell with its Giver on high.”

In chapter ix. 7—10 there is something to our immediate purpose :

GO THY WAY, EAT THY BREAD WITH JOY, AND DRINK THY WINE WITH A MERRY HEART ; FOR GOD NOW ACCEPTETH THY WORKS. LET THY GARMENTS BE ALWAYS WHITE ; AND LET THY HEAD LACK NO OINTMENT. LIVE JOYFULLY WITH THE WIFE WHOM THOU LOVEST ALL THE DAYS OF THE LIFE OF THY VANITY, WHICH HE HATH GIVEN THEE UNDER THE SUN : FOR THAT IS THY PORTION IN THIS LIFE, AND IN THY LABOUR WHICH THOU TAKEST UNDER THE SUN. WHAT-

SOEVER THY HAND FINDETH TO DO, DO IT WITH THY MIGHT; FOR THERE IS NO WORK, NOR DEVICE, NOR KNOWLEDGE, NOR WISDOM, IN THE GRAVE, WHITHER THOU GOEST.

The wines of ancient times, though milder than ours, possessed likewise an inebriating element, and against the abuse of any one of the gifts of a gracious Providence, the Scriptures are full of awful denunciations. The wine commonly used in Palestine was pure "blood of the grape," freshly expressed, like that supplied to Hiram's labourers in Lebanon (2 Chron. ii. 10), unadulterated by stimulating infusions;—a syrup such as the unfermented wine which, as travellers inform us, the Turks carry with them on their journeys. On the term "merry" I would observe, that though now applied to light sportive joy, it was formerly not so; and throughout this book, as also in the prophecy of Isaiah and the Epistle of St. James, it denotes a state of mind free from distress, happy, agreeable, and cheerful. The direction in the passage is of similar import with those of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3), "Rejoice evermore," and (1 Thess. v. 8), "Rejoice in the Lord alway;" and a good illustration of the nature of

this joy is found in the proceedings of the first Christians as described in Acts ii. 46, "They, continuing daily with one accord in the temple . . . did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." An instance of similar conduct will be found in Neh. viii. 10. This is the joy recommended by the wise king: the gladness of heart which arises from a sense of the Divine approval. We must seek acceptance with God before we venture to look with satisfaction in outward things; but when through grace we have obtained a good conscience and a lively hope, we may enjoy the bounty of our heavenly Father, rejoice in His perfections, His government and promises. The world would persuade that a hearty devotion to His service is a gloomy, repulsive thing, debarring us from reasonable enjoyment. O credit it not! Religion's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace." Happiness, peaceful serenity, are the privileges, the duty³, of each faithful servant. He can, under all events, look up to God as his reconciled Father, who loves him, cares for him,

³ See Part ii. sect. v., term "sober."

and watches over his safety; and he can, in the confidence of faith, commit himself and all his interests to almighty wisdom and love. He realizes the continual presence of his Redeemer (John xiv. 23), and thus amid all changes is he filled with present comfort and holy inspiring hopes.

In a previous part of the book (chapter vii. 27) the great Hebrew monarch had declared his own ill success in meeting with female excellence; nor, when we consider his course, can we feel surprise. Inflamed with power and prosperity, and in violation of an express prohibition, he had gathered around him a vast number of wives from idolatrous nations (1 Kings xi.), instead of concentrating his affections upon one. Was it to be expected that any of these would be a person of virtue and piety? And may we not conclude that amidst the rivalry and the jealousies of such a multitude his life was disquieted? Yet is not his language that of peevish satire, but of humble penitence, confessing in bitterness of heart his departure from the ways of the Lord; and in the passage brought before us in the beginning of this section he leads us to believe that by the society of A WIFE a man's sorrows will be

lightened and his happiness increased. How much more does this prove so, if she be "loving and amiable, faithful and obedient, and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, a follower of holy and godly matrons ⁴!"

A guardian angel o'er his life presiding,
Doubling his pleasures, and his cares dividing;
How oft her eyes read his; her gentle mind
To all his wishes, all his thoughts inclined
Still subject.

⁴ "The great secret of conjugal happiness," as Barnes observes, "is in the cultivation of a proper temper. It is not so much in the great and trying scenes of life that the strength of virtue is tested; it is in the events that are constantly occurring; the manifestation of kindness in the things that are happening every moment; the gentleness that flows along every day like the stream that winds through the meadow and around the house, noiseless, but diffusing fertility by day and by night. Great deeds rarely occur. The happiness of life depends little on them, but mainly on little acts of kindness. We need them every where. We need them always and eminently in the marriage relation. There is need of gentleness and love returning every morning, beaming in the eye and dwelling in the heart through the livelong day."

And in the similarly graphic language of another writer: "Peace at home is one of the choicest blessings, and one of the best methods for insuring peace outwardly and to the whole

The Preacher concludes this portion of his sapient moralizing with the solemn admonition, that whilst we duly cultivate the social affections, and strive to be pleasing to our dear friends and relations ; whilst we use the comforts of this life and bear patiently its distresses, we must ever keep in mind that all things which here below we possess or enjoy are passing away, and that we must aim at nobler attainments, even a growing fitness of soul, in holiness of character, feelings, and views, for the em-

compass of society. The brawls of the fireside are some of the worst wars that are waged ; they stab the heart in the tenderest spot. Where we looked for quiet, behold tumult ; where we expected rest, vexation of spirit. To learn to bear and to forbear ; to give generously, and to yield gracefully ; to prefer to lose the argument rather than the temper ; to be willing to suffer a great wrong rather than do the least wrong ; to give way to the unfortunate temper of others rather than gain a point at the cost of a war of words ; a few such plain habits would prevent a world of trouble, and spread joy and happiness through scenes where every blessing may be poisoned by the corrosion of embittered feelings. How beautiful on this earth is a family dwelling in peace and affection !

“ Kindness indeed cannot stand alone, nor support the whole fabric of the character with its single column ; as what virtue can ? It is perhaps a little thing,—the kind word, the kind

poyments of the life eternal. We should use all things in subserviency to the glory of God, allowing neither the gratifications of the present state, nor its trials, to make us negligent in our several duties. Time is winging its onward flight to eternity: O let us live as "new creatures;" with new motives, principles, and objects: "yield our" several "members as instruments of righteousness unto God," and thus "adorn the doctrine of God our

look, the cordial token of recognition, the thoughtful remembrance, the slight favour, the passing salutation of good will, the forbearance to say what momentary impatience may suggest, the deference to others' words, the readiness to hearken, and the candour to judge,—these and the thousand other modes of expressing and cherishing kindness of heart and manners; they are little, and some may think, insignificant things; but they cannot be spared: for they are slight yet essential links of pure happiness. They make or mar our peace more than poverty or riches, complexion, caste, plain furniture, or sideboards of gold and silver. They may be humble virtues, and none could claim for them much; and they are liable, like all current coin, to be confounded with the counterfeit; yet how inexpressibly delightful is it to meet with them in the thorny paths: and though we may, perchance, not call the dear friends of our fireside wise or graceful, beautiful or eloquent, still what an indescribable and heavenly charm lingers around those in whose 'tongue is the law of kindness.'"—*Livermore.*

Saviour," and be useful in our day and generation,
"FOR THERE IS NO WORK, NOR DEVICE, NOR KNOW-
LEDGE, NOR WISDOM, IN THE GRAVE," whither we
are hastening every moment.

Soon shall end thy earthly mission,
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

Scripture Notices of Married Life.

PART II.

The New Testament.

A union, purest, most sublime ;
The grave itself but for a time
The holy bond shall sever :
His hand who rent shall bind again
To be complete for ever !

And after the long vernal day of life
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where bliss and love immortal reign.

Thomson.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WE now come to the Christian dispensation ; to the directions for married life which its fuller light reveals. As in the Gospels there are but two passages bearing immediately upon the subject, which shall be duly introduced in our course, we proceed at once to THE EPISTLES. It has seemed fit to the Holy Spirit in this portion of His word to instruct us, not in formal treatises, but in familiar letters written under His guidance to Churches or individuals to meet particular exigencies, affording an infallible commentary upon the words of our Lord, and more fully explaining the mysteries of our holy faith. In some of them we shall find most valuable instruction upon the duties of married persons.

SECTION I.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS¹.

THE writer is one of the most eminent characters of ancient times, manifesting throughout a life of missionary enterprise, an undaunted heroism, enthusiastic ardour, and indomitable perseverance, united to an affectionate spirit and a firmness of purpose. This Epistle has ever been valued for its elevated, vivid, and glowing illustrations of Divine truth. The Apostle's mind is transported by the grandeur of his principal subject,—the riches of

¹ Ephesus was renowned for its magnificence, its luxury, and the practice of sorcery. During Paul's brief sojourn there many were turned from idols to serve the true God. In times succeeding it became the seat of a metropolitan bishop, and the place wherein was held a famous general council; but "the candlestick has been removed" (Rev. ii. 5), and it lies in ruins and uninhabited; and the country around, once abounding with flourishing Churches, is occupied by the worshippers of Mahommed or of the Virgin Mary. Can the Christian think on these things without wafting up a prayer that the calamitous war now raging may be so ordered by Him "who ruleth in the kingdom of men" as to hasten the period when spiritual darkness shall no longer cover this beautiful portion of the globe!

redeeming love ; and whilst dwelling minutely on our duties, he rests the motive to each on our relations to the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In chapter v., having exhorted Christians to mutual concession towards each other, he goes on (verse 22) to illustrate this in married life, showing “the surpassing honour given to that state ; he compares the tenderness of the Redeemer’s love to the tenderness of conjugal love, introducing this, the closest of human ties, as an example of the greatest Divine mercies².”

WIVES, SUBMIT YOURSELVES UNTO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS UNTO THE LORD. FOR THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF THE WIFE, EVEN AS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH : AND HE IS THE SAVIOUR OF THE BODY. THEREFORE AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT UNTO CHRIST, SO LET THE WIVES BE SUBJECT TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS IN EVERY THING³.

² Abp. Sumner.

³ “Type of Christ’s Church, image of his spiritual spouse ! remember that, as she is the mother of pure and holy children, so must thou be ; thou must be the mother of Abel, not of Cain ; thou must add champions to the host of God, not revellers to the rout of Belial.”—*Rectory of Valehead*. [“Through

Wives! show cheerful submission to your husbands in every thing within the compass of the con-

“Through what a peculiar and solemn train of thoughts are we led from the outward and every-day rite, taking away our sight from common objects and fixing it upon the ark of our salvation, directing the mind in one comprehensive glance backward to prophecy, and forward to fulfilment, and bidding us, in the dearest of our natural connexions, to look to the most precious of our spiritual! Thus, as in every other instance, does the Gospel lay its sanctifying hand upon each act and incident, and refines it to pure spirituality.”—*Ibid.*

“The Gospel is the moving power that regulates the Christian’s heart in every imaginable position in which he can stand to his fellow-creature, and ought to carry its influence in the performance of every duty, of whatsoever nature the duty be. The line of conduct here laid down is addressed to a godly woman, to a woman who brings her duty to her husband in direct connexion with her duty to her God. Her own will may be crossed, her own temper tried; she may be (as no doubt will be the case with all conditions of humanity where we have to do with one another, selfish and sinful as we are) tried in several ways; but she has her ‘stronghold to which she may continually resort;’ she has her Lord always to direct, to guide, to enable her, according to His blessed word, thus to regulate her conduct.”—*Mc Ghee.*

“The words, ‘as unto the Lord,’ do not point to the source of duty, but describe its nature. The submission of the wife is in kind that of the Church to Christ. It is not forced, but it

jugal obligation ; the Divine law, no less than your own frame of mind and body, requires this, as necessary to domestic order and peace : for in the pre-eminence conferred upon the husband there is a resemblance of the intimate relation subsisting between Christ the Head and the Church His

springs from loyal attachment, from her conscious need of support and protection, from a just view of the relationship in which she stands, a helpmate, and of the original and continued destiny of her sex. She may be in many respects man's superior,—in delicacy of sentiment, warmth of devotion, strength of moral heroism, power and patience of self-denial, and general sympathy with suffering and distress. Still the obedience inculcated by the Apostle sits gracefully upon her, and is in harmony with all that is fair and feminine in her position and temperament."—*Eadie*.

"Had the Apostle," says Bp. Daniel Wilson, "placed the matter of authority on the footing of age, influence, education, beauty, health, fortune, how constantly would disputes have been generated ! but now that it stands on the command of God, all is harmony and peace. . . . Nothing can show more clearly the wisdom of the Divine rule, than the wretchedness, misery, and often ruin, temporal and eternal, which follow from the assumption, on the part of the wife, of an authority which God has prohibited, and from the consequent jealousy and contention which it engenders on the part of the husband, of a bitterness which St. Paul expressly forbids."

body: the head is the source of vital influence to the body, and has no interest distinct from it: Christ preserves the Church from injury, and supplies it with every thing requisite for its benefit: and in like way is it your husbands' office to protect, provide for, and comfort you, and promote your advancement in faith and holiness.

HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, EVEN AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH, AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR IT; THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY AND CLEANSE IT WITH THE WASHING OF WATER BY THE WORD, THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT IT TO HIMSELF A GLORIOUS CHURCH, NOT HAVING SPOT, OR WRINKLE, OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT IT SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH. SO OUGHT MEN TO LOVE THEIR WIVES EVEN AS THEIR OWN BODIES. HE THAT LOVETH HIS WIFE LOVETH HIMSELF. FOR NO MAN EVER YET HATED HIS OWN FLESH; BUT NOURISHETH AND CHERISHETH IT, EVEN AS THE LORD THE CHURCH: FOR WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY, OF HIS FLESH, AND OF HIS BONES. FOR THIS CAUSE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL BE JOINED UNTO HIS WIFE, AND THEY TWO SHALL BE ONE FLESH. THIS

IS A GREAT MYSTERY: BUT I SPEAK CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. NEVERTHELESS LET EVERY ONE OF YOU IN PARTICULAR SO LOVE HIS WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF; AND THE WIFE SEE THAT SHE REVERENCE HER HUSBAND.

Ye husbands! love your wives; not with mere earthly selfish attachment, inconstant and readily estranged by the trials and vicissitudes of life; but with permanent, with spiritual affection: take as your model an example of love the most wonderful that has ever been evinced,—the love of Christ to the Church⁴: a love so inconceivably pure, fervent, and inalienable, undeserving and rebellious as was the object, that He shrank not from a death of anguish and ignominy in order to effect its pardon

⁴ A theme upon which the New Testament writers delight to expatiate. This Apostle (Rom. viii. 39), after describing the wondrous condescension exhibited in the plan of salvation, demands, "What shall separate us from the love of Christ?" and proceeds in animated strains of triumph to offer bold defiance to any created thing to effect it, whether adversity, prosperity, the violence of men or evil spirits: and truly this love of our adorable Redeemer is the grand magnet to draw men to Him, subduing their stubborn wills, and constraining them to a hearty surrender of themselves to His service.

and reconciliation, covenanting in baptism ⁵ the influence of His Spirit to subdue sin and to apply the word of truth to the heart, that having purified, He might consecrate it ⁶ by complete and eternal

⁵ The Church is the bride, the Lamb's wife; and in her baptism there is allusion to the Eastern customary ablutions of a bride, and to the spotless purity of her attire. Since this paraphrase was written I have had access to a valuable work, "Conybeare and Howson's Life and Epistles of St. Paul," in which there is the following note: "Literally, by the laver of the water; equivalent to the washing of regeneration, Titus iii. 5. St. Paul explains 'the word' to be equivalent to 'the word of faith which we preach' (Rom. x. 8), and the 'word of God' (Rom. x. 17. Eph. vi. 17); and the junction of 'by the word' with 'that he might sanctify' better suits the Greek. On this view the meaning is, that the Church, having been purified by the waters of baptism, is hallowed by the mind of God imparted to it, whether mediately or immediately. Compare Heb. iv. 12, 13." Professor Eadie inclines to a different connexion of the terms. My volume being designed for general readers, I must not dwell longer than to refer to his Commentary, in which the various views of critics on the passage will be found.

⁶ "His expiatory death was an indispensable pre-requisite to this cleansing and consecration. Pardon and purity, the gift of the Spirit, and the power of the word, spring from the atonement. The atonement has this legal influence, that God, who prepared and has accepted it, can pardon and purify in full con-

union with Himself. With such self-abandoning, sanctifying love should you, husband, love your

sistency with the honour of His character and the full requirements of His government; and it has also this moral influence, that where it is trusted in, and where its blessings are enjoyed, it moves the heart to love and vigilance, sets Jesus before it as the great Exemplar, and furnishes it with all those motives which urge it with resistless power to the purity and fervour of a life of self-consecration.

“For this Church Jesus died, that He might consecrate and cleanse it by His blood, His Spirit, and His word. It is this Church, so redeemed and sanctified, which Jesus sets apart to Himself as His special possession and enjoyment. . . . Such then is the ultimate perfection and destiny of the Church. In her spotless purity the love of Christ finds its extreme and glorious design realized. The love which led Him to die, to bestow pardon, and to secure newness of life, is not contented till its object be robed in unsullied and unchanging purity. But where is this perfection for the first time possessed, and when does this presentation take place? We have already seen that the presentment is not contemporary with the consecration, but is posterior to it, as the result comes after the process. And that result does not take place finally and formally on earth. The Church we understand, in its full significance, as the whole body of the redeemed, personified and represented as a spiritual spouse. The species shall have completed its cycle of existence on earth; and every one whom the Saviour’s all-seeing eye beheld as belonging to His Church, and whom, therefore, He

wife. She has become identified with you in interests and desires; and as natural instinct teaches you not to slight your body, or care less for its welfare on account of weakness, deformity, or tendency to disease, but to oppose every thing which would contribute to its injury, so should you love your wife, as being indeed your own body. In similar way does our compassionate and gracious Lord bear with the offences of His people, and casts them not off. Is it not a cheering truth that we are members of His body? Conformable to this is the appointment of the old dispensation, confirmed by Himself in the new, that the marriage

loved, and died for, and cleansed, has shared in the final redemption."

This extract is more protracted than was my intention, yet the subject is no barren uninteresting speculation, but one on which it is most important to hold sound opinions; and this writer's statement of it is clear and distinct, refuting the theory of those who would place the merits of Christ's sufferings not in their vicarious endurance of a penalty incurred by us, but in the moral excellence of Him who endured them; and also the false notion lately revived by Professor Maurice, which regards the love of Christ as the redeeming element of the atonement; thereby, as Fadie exposes it, placing the *motive* for the *act*.

bond should be stronger than the natural, and surmount the nearest ties of kindred, insomuch that a man shall forego the society of the dear relatives to whom he owed his birth, and adhere closely to this his second self; and they shall be united in as familiar and undivided companionship as if they were one soul and one body.

I have cited the words of Scripture in regard to marriage, but I use them in a still higher sense. Herein is a great profound truth; Divine love is prefigured and illustrated; love which no one can understand or appreciate without the teaching of the Holy Spirit: I mean the sacred union⁷ between

⁷ In the Gospel of St. John, Jesus Himself expresses this union in terms upon which the believer may meditate with deep gratitude and reverential awe. "Our thoughts," Scott observes, "are swallowed up in those depths of wisdom and love, in those mysteries of the Godhead; the light of heaven can alone reveal them to us."

How just and pious is the comment of Barnes: "We have a Saviour who is in no respect deficient in wisdom, power, and grace to redeem and save us. There is nothing necessary for our salvation which He is not qualified to do; there is nothing which we need to fulfil our duties, to meet temptation, to bear trial, which He is not able to impart. We may go to Him in all our troubles, weaknesses, temptations, and wants, and may

Christ the husband and the body of believers His bride; that He, "who is God over all," should have looked down with such tender pity on our fallen race, as to receive it into union with Himself, to regard it as part of Himself and to accomplish a plan for raising it by holiness to never-ending felicity.

I have spoken of the Church in a collective view; but to the married my exhortation has reference in their individual capacity. You, husband, are supplied with motives to cherish your wife with the same affection as you do yourself, defending in danger, comforting in trial, providing against contingency, enduring any sacrifices for her benefit; nay, ready with willing self-devotion to forfeit your very life sooner than she should perish or be in danger; and you, wife, on your part, treat your husband with respectful esteem, in no instance venturing to assume his authority, but making it your object to please and gratify him.

Above all, ye human pair, linked together for a

be supplied from his fulness, just as, if we were thirsty, we might go to *an ocean* of pure water and drink."

time in bonds thus intimate and hallowed, be it your grand aim to draw each other into closer resemblance to the likeness of the adorable Saviour; let HIM be the pattern for your unceasing imitation; consecrate to HIM your highest love!

Sweet solace, that for those who slumber,
Lord, in Thy rest, if worthy we,
We, who now mourn, complete their number
In bliss shall see.

* * * * *

Such bliss be mine, all-righteous Father,
All worthless I, save for His name,
Who comes His purchased flock to gather,
His own to claim.

Sundial of Armoj.

SECTION II.

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

A LETTER by the same hand to the Asiatic Church of Colossè next claims our attention : it is a pithy and earnest composition, guarding believers in Christ against Gentile philosophy and Jewish tradition, and showing that the whole work of our salvation dependeth upon Him alone in whom dwelleth, in a bodily shape, all the fulness of the Divine nature and perfections.

In chapter iii. is urged the fulfilment of our duties from a principle of gratitude to this loving Redeemer. The resemblance between this Epistle and that which lately we have been considering is so striking as to justify the remark of "the one being in most places a commentary upon the other," and the advice to married persons is similar ; but as in the adjoined expression a slight change arises, some brief separate notice is rendered necessary.

Verses 18, 19. WIVES, SUBMIT YOURSELVES UNTO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS IT IS FIT IN THE LORD. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, AND BE NOT BITTER AGAINST THEM¹.

Wife! resign your own wishes to those of your husband; to do so becomes your profession of faith in Christ: yet not in any way which contravenes the higher duty owing to Him. And to you, husband, my requirement is, not that you rule your wife,—this might afford pretext for despotic exaction²; but I sum up your duty in the gentle term

¹ When we reflect on the manner in which the duties of the conjugal relation were violated by the heathen; how much there was of the harshness of the tyrant in the heathen husband, and of the baseness of the slave in the character of the heathen wife; how much pollution prevailed in what should be the sanctuary of purity and love, we cannot help seeing that few things were more calculated to strike, and that favourably, heathen observers, than the example of the genius and power of Christianity in softening the character of the husband, and elevating at once the conduct and character of the wife; and in thus introducing into the domestic circle an order, and purity, and endearment far beyond what philosophy had accomplished or even dreamed of.—*Brown*.

² This is strongly urged by Jeremy Taylor in a brief and pithy sentence: "He certainly is strangely sacrilegious, and a

LOVE. From you be far removed reproachful or harsh language to your endeared partner, not to speak of quarrelling or unkind usage, be her infirmities and failings what they may. All those meek and tender graces which in the passages preceding I have commanded, of forbearance, charity, peace, and the like, should be specially observed towards her, and uphold her authority in the domestic sphere. As your union is designed for mutual aid and comfort, her subjection should not be greater than suits the dear relation in which you mutually stand. It is the Lord's will that she concede to you (not as to a rigorous tyrant, an abuse incurring grievous culpability, but), that you with benign

violator of the laws of hospitality and of sanctuary, who uses her rudely who is fled for protection not only to his house, but also to his heart and bosom."

"In this brief and powerful enforcement of the conjugal obligations, the corresponding duty of husbands is expressed not by the correlative term "command," but by the softer one "love," and a caution is added against the effect which even this gentle authority may produce on his rougher nature. When irritations occur, do not vent upon your wife the bitterness excited in the mind by others in the world abroad."—*Bp. Daniel Wilson.*

influence may act in all ways for her protection and her welfare.

Subjoined are the valuable observations of Abp. Sumner: "Left to itself, the heart is like a ship in the midst of a wide sea, tossed about by opposing waves, carried in every direction, according to the passion which may prevail. The Gospel shows the course which it must take, overcoming those winds and waves; gives special instruction suited to the different circumstances of mankind, that each may be so directed as to accomplish the will of the Chief Ruler. From the moment that sin entered into the world there could be no perfect unity of will. It became needful to the welfare of the household that one should lead and the other should obey. Therefore the decree was uttered concerning the woman, 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.' But love, as it makes obedience pleasant, so it makes command gentle; and so ought men to love their wives even as themselves, as given of God to be 'an help meet for them,' since 'it is not good for man to be alone' in his earthly pilgrimage—given to be his adviser, his comfort, his companion."

“ She round thy sweet domestic bower
The wreath of fadeless love shall twine ;
Watch for thy step at vesper hour,
And blend her holiest prayer with thine.”

SECTION III.

THE FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER.

THIS Apostle's character is marked by fearlessness and simplicity; by his strong faith and ardent love; by the prompt decision with which he carried out the purposes of his Master. He was one of three Apostles distinguished by our Lord, but no official superiority was given him: he does not mention any thing of the kind himself. The charge to him in St. John's Gospel was an admonition to future self-watchfulness. In Acts viii. he is sent by the other Apostles instead of claiming power over them. In Acts xv., when he had given his opinion, James deliberates further, and presiding, determines the question; and on one occasion he was reproved by Paul, of whom he afterwards, to his own honour, speaks as "his beloved brother." These few remarks will suffice to show how weak is the founda-

tion on which rest the claims of the Italian bishops as his infallible successors.

In one respect, however, a peculiar dignity was conferred upon him. He was the first herald of the Gospel; the first to unlock the riches of Christ, —to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, to the Gentiles in the centurion's house; and thus though the Church be built upon the foundation of all the Apostles (Eph. ii. 20), yet, as a reward for his prompt confession, he was allowed to be the first founder. (Matt. xvi. 18, 19.)

His Epistles are characterized by a noble vehemence and fervour, together with much tenderness, and by energetic statements of the most cheering portions of the Gospel. No part of the sacred records abounds in more richness of heavenly truth or depth of spiritual experience.

This his First Epistle is one of the finest books of the New Testament. It is beautifully described by Leighton: "A brief yet clear summary both of the consolations and instructions necessary for the encouragement and direction of a Christian on his journey to heaven, elevating his thoughts and desires to that happiness, and strengthening

him against all opposition in the way, both that of corruption within, and temptations and afflictions from without. The main doctrines insisted on are faith, obedience, and patience; to establish believers, to direct them in doing, and to comfort them in suffering."

In the opening salutation there is distinctly stated the concurrence of the Godhead in Redemption, and the separate office of each of the Divine persons. On reaching the third chapter we find directions to Christian wives; how important their conduct is to the progress of true religion, and therefore their adorning should be not with design to please men, but to obtain the approbation of the Lord.

LIKEWISE, YE WIVES, BE IN SUBJECTION TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS; THAT, IF ANY OBEY NOT THE WORD, THEY ALSO MAY WITHOUT THE WORD BE WON BY THE CONVERSATION OF THE WIVES¹; WHILE THEY BEHOLD YOUR CHASTE² CONVER-

¹ See sect. v.

² "I have known some wives, making a profession of religion, and married to ungodly men, who have made religion odious to their husbands by the manner in which they con-

SATION COUPLED WITH FEAR. WHOSE ADORNING LET IT NOT BE THAT OUTWARD ADORNING³ OF PLAITING THE HAIR, AND WEARING OF

ducted themselves towards them; thinking that because they were religious and their husbands were not so, therefore they could regulate and order every thing in their own way. If her husband be an ungodly man, she should, if possible, be the more careful in discharge of her duty. It is a grievous evil when the effect of religion is to lead persons who profess it to exhibit neglect of duty or unamiability of temper. I have known, on the contrary, a pious woman married to an irreligious man so to adorn the doctrine of Christ, that she made religion sweet even to those who knew it not; made them respect the influence of religion in her, though they did not honour it for its own sake."—*M'Ghee*.

³ This is to be understood in a limited sense: as St. John vi. 27, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life;" which it is evident does not mean that we are not to labour for the needful food of the body, but that we are still more earnestly to labour for the spiritual food of the soul; otherwise it would oppose the plain direction (2 Thess. iii. 10), "If any would not work, neither should he eat." Similar phraseology is found in St. Luke, xiv. 26: "If any come after me, and hate not his father . . . he cannot be my disciple;" that is, my commands must supersede every thing else; no ties of relationship are to interfere with it.

"The love of ornament," says Dr. Brown, "belongs to the species, but peculiarly so to the female part of it. The prophet

GOLD, OR OF PUTTING ON OF APPAREL; BUT LET IT BE THE HIDDEN MAN OF THE HEART, IN THAT WHICH IS NOT CORRUPTIBLE, EVEN THE ORNAMENT OF A MEEK AND QUIET SPIRIT, WHICH IS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OF GREAT PRICE. FOR AFTER THIS MANNER IN THE OLD TIME THE HOLY WOMEN ALSO, WHO TRUSTED IN GOD, ADORNED THEMSELVES, BEING IN SUBJECTION UNTO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS: EVEN AS SARA OBEYED ABRAHAM, CALLING HIM LORD: WHOSE DAUGHTERS YE ARE, AS LONG AS YE DO WELL, AND ARE NOT AFRAID WITH ANY AMAZEMENT.

The admonition may be thus expanded:

Ye who are wives, be not deficient in prompt obedience and affectionate respect to your husbands; and should any of you be united to one who is still

describes it as unlikely that a maid should forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire (Jer. ii. 32). And there is nothing wrong in the principle itself; it serves important purposes; the want of it is a serious drawback. A sloven is disagreeable, a slattern intolerable. Christianity makes no war on any of man's natural principles, but the abuse of them. Its object is not to extirpate, but to prune them, to train them, to make them yield good fruit."

unconverted to the truth as it is in Jesus, do not enter into disputation⁴ with him, which may excite the pride of the natural heart; but by the quiet persuasive influence of prudent speech, tender entreaty, and unaffected piety of life, exemplify the power of godliness. Thus, by Divine aid, for which you will unremittingly apply, prejudice may be softened, and your endeared partner be won over to discern the LOVE OF CHRIST, and, blessed result! you prove the means of his conversion and salvation: for your patient meekness and persevering faithfulness must (in the Lord's good time) attract his serious thoughts, and press home the conviction upon his soul that the Gospel is a heart-working thing, powerfully operative upon the whole

⁴ This interpretation may surprise such as, being unacquainted with the original, are not aware that it stands "aneu logo," literally "without word," that is, without discussion, say the authors quoted in "Trollope's Analecta;" the prudent conduct of a Christian wife being a tacit proof of the benefits of Christianity. Many commentators, however, accept our authorized version, as Hammond, Henry, Dr. Brown, and even Barnes: though the reasoning of the latter seems to me to tell, in this one instance; against his own view.

character. Let your apparel be suitable to your circumstance and station, and your personal appearance equally remote from frivolous decoration and slovenly neglect ; to outward^s embellishment, which,

^s “ Christian women,” says Leighton, “ should avoid undue expense in their dress ; it both argues and feeds the pride of the heart, and defrauds, if not others of their due, yet the poor of their charity, which in God’s sight is a due debt too. And far more comfort shalt thou have on thy death-bed to remember that, at such a time, instead of putting lace on my own clothes, I helped a naked back to a clothing ; I abated some of my superfluities to supply the poor with necessities ; far sweeter will this be than to remember that I could needlessly cast out many pounds to serve my pride, while I grudged a penny to relieve the poor.”

“ Lord, raise our hearts and wishes higher,
Touch our souls with sacred fire ;
Then with an elevated eye
We’ll pass these glittering trifles by.”

“ No Christian woman will suffer the adorning of the body to be her chief business or her delight. She will not render herself accountable at the bar of judgment for the work of hours, days, weeks, months, a long life of years, which might, which ought to have been otherwise and more worthily employed, in a way more becoming rational, responsible, immortal beings.”—*Brown*.

like every thing connected with the mortal frame, must ere long perish, no undue solicitude will be devoted; aught savouring of levity, ostentation, or imprudent expense you will wholly shun. Be yours, Christian matron, a nobler aim:—those spiritual ornaments which throughout eternity shall shine, that internal dress which beautifies THE SOUL! the cultivated mind, the pure and gentle spirit, the sympathizing yet unobtrusive benevolence, the patient temper, bearing meekly provocation, and refraining from offering it. Thus conducting yourself, you will not fail in your blessed object; the permanent affection of your husband will be secured, and, beyond all, the approbation of your God!

By such a course you will imitate the pious women of former days, whose examples are worthy of remembrance; as, for instance, Sarah, the dutiful spouse of the patriarch. Of the same family and rank as himself, she yet addressed him by a title of personal respect, in acknowledgment of the authority vested in him by the Most High; and you shall be accounted her descendants, and heirs of her blessing, if you act with fidelity to God and to your husband, undeterred by present conse-

quences from firm adherence to your duty and your principles⁶.

⁶ In a former part of the volume I had to comment on the unsightly picture of a fretful, imperious, extravagant wife, as described by the pencil of inspiration. Here is presented a more pleasing office, in the words of the author just before quoted: "How beautiful the Christian woman who, amidst the endless perplexing details of domestic management, maintains an unruffled temper, and in patience possesses her soul! It is a lovely pattern which Jay gives of a Christian wife, as one who can calmly remonstrate and meekly reprove; who can yield and accommodate; who would rather endure than complain, and would rather suffer in secret than disturb others with her grief." The meek and quiet spirit, like faith, will be found to honour, and glory, and praise at the coming of Jesus Christ. In that day the man who for his genius, learning, or successful ambition excited the wonder of nations, and whose praises were celebrated from age to age, but who never obtained, because he never sought, "the honour that cometh from above," shall be filled with shame, covered with contempt; while the woman of a meek and quiet spirit, who in the retirement of lowly domestic life performed conscientiously the laborious duties, and sustained patiently the varied trials of her humble sphere, from regard to the authority of God, and under the constraining influence of the love of His Son, shall be "all glorious within," one whom the King of kings delights to honour, and to whom He will say, in the presence of assembled men and angels, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." [And

APPENDIX.

ON the course to be pursued by one of the parties when the other is uninfluenced by the Gospel, such wise and judicious advices are suggested by Professor Brown, that my readers will consider it not inappropriate to have them introduced at the end of this section. They are applicable to the case of either the husband or the wife who may be placed in such trying circumstances, though addressed in the first instance to the wife. See 1 Cor. vii. 16.

“A Christian woman may, without fault on her

And again, to quote the pious archbishop : “Men think it poor and mean to be weak. Nothing is more exposed to contempt than a spirit of meekness. It is mere folly with men ; but that is no matter ; this overweighs all their disesteem ; ‘it is with God of great price.’ And things are as He values them, and no otherwise. Though it be not the country’s fashion, yet it is the fashion at court ; yea, it is the king’s own fashion. ‘Learn of me,’ says He, ‘for I am meek and lowly in heart ;’ and when He girds on His sword and rides prosperously, it is ‘for *meekness* and truth and righteousness.’ ”

part, find herself the wife of an unconverted man. It is a possible thing that she may have been deceived in her estimate of the character of him whom she has chosen for her companion through life; the mask of religion having been assumed to serve a purpose, or, what is of much more frequent occurrence, and to which the Apostle here in all probability refers, both may have been in a state of unconversion when the marriage relation was formed; but a change in the wife having taken place subsequently, she under Divine influence having been led to embrace a vital Christianity, whilst her husband remained opposed to it, 'dead in trespasses and sins,' she becoming a subject of Jesus Christ, while he continues a rebel. What possibly would have prevented, what in ordinary circumstances ought to have prevented marriage, does not dissolve it. The Christian wife is not warranted to withdraw from her unconverted husband on that ground. She must continue with him, and perform to him the duties of an affectionate and respectful wife. She must be in subjection to her husband, probably more in subjection than ever; for her conversion will probably have

greatly widened her view of conjugal duty and deepened her sense of its obligation.

“The situation is a trying one; and the Apostle proposes a very powerful and encouraging motive to a discharge of its difficult duties. He holds out the hope to the Christian wife of becoming the means of the salvation of her husband. He supposes a very bad case. He supposes that the husband has ‘not obeyed THE WORD,’ has resisted its claims on his attention, faith, and obedience. The Christian wife has no doubt endeavoured to bring him within reach of the Christian preacher’s voice; it may be he refused to come; or he came, but departed unimpressed, unbelieving, it may be scoffing and blaspheming. The Christian wife will use more private means to bring him under the influence of THE WORD, by reading the Scriptures and other good books, if she can get him to listen to them; and by wisely and affectionately, with her own living voice, endeavouring to convey to him the saving truth. But all may be in vain; so that all direct attempts to effect a change have to be abandoned as likely to do mischief rather than good, hardening prejudice, provoking resistance.

“Still the Christian wife must not despair; especially she must not be weary in the conscientious performance of her duties; and the motive, the sweetly constraining motive, so full of power over the principles of the Christian and the affections of the wife, is, ‘And what knowest thou, O woman, whether thou shalt save thy husband?’ Even without the word, which he will not obey, he may be gained by thy chaste conversation, based on true Christian piety. It has been said justly, that ‘men who are prejudiced observe actions a great deal more than words.’ The cheerful, affectionate, constant performance of all conjugal duties, especially when it is made quite plain that this is the result of Christian principle, is fitted to make impression even on unthinking and insensible men. The difference for the better which conversion has made on the relative conduct of the wife almost necessarily leads the husband’s mind to what has produced it, and gives birth to the thought, ‘that cannot be a bad thing which produces such good effects.’ His prejudices are gradually weakened. By and by he, it may be voluntarily, commences to talk upon a subject on which formerly he had

angrily forbidden all conversation, accompanying his wife to the Christian assembly, and ultimately listens to, believes, and obeys the word which he had formerly rejected. 'A life of undissembled holiness and heavenliness and self-denial, and meekness and love, is a powerful sermon, which, if you be constantly preaching before those who are near you, will hardly miss of a good effect. Works are more palpably significant than words alone¹.' This is the natural tendency of a quiet, cheerful, persevering performance of conjugal duty to unconverted husbands; 'not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward;' and by the accompanying blessing of the Holy Spirit this has not unfrequently been its blessed effect.

"There is something very beautiful in the phraseology in which the conversion of the husband is described. He is said to be 'won.' He was lost—lost to true happiness; lost, continuing in his present state, for eternity; but when he is brought to the knowledge of the truth he is won; gained—gained to himself, gained to the Saviour;

¹ Baxter.

‘added,’ as Leighton says, ‘to HIS treasury, who thought not His own precious blood too dear to lay out for *thy* gain.’

“The motive here presented to a truly Christian woman is certainly a very cogent one. It has been finely brought out by a great living preacher. ‘The salvation of a soul! The salvation of a HUSBAND’S soul! O, seek that you lose not him who is so dear to you, in the “valley of the shadow of death!” See that the parting at death be not a final parting. Let your friendship survive the desolation of time, and be renewed to infinite advantage beyond the grave. To the tie that nothing but death can sever, seek to add one which defies even his power to cut asunder. Think, O WIFE, of the happiness that will attend the success of your endeavours! What pleasure will attend the remainder of your days, now of one heart and mind. How sweet will be the counsel which you take together. How delightful to go to the house of God in company. How enlivening to add the *our* Father of the family altar to the *my* Father of the closet, which witnessed your wrestling with God, that he whom you loved may also be led to

say *my* Father. And what will be your joy and crown of rejoicing in that day, when, before assembled men and angels, he will say, "Blessed be the Providence which attached us in yonder world, and has still more united us in this." "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me led me, not to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but to the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of GOD²!" " " " "

O yet unseen by mortal sight,
May in our souls that scene endure,
That we, through hope of that delight,
May purer grow as thou art pure.
And when the day shall come, that we
Shall know no more, as now, in part,
May we unveil'd Thy presence see,
Be like, and know Thee as Thou art;
And evermore with voice and heart
Join concert with Thy heavenly host,
And bear, in praising Thee, our part,
Thee Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Mant's Ancient Hymns.

² Jay.

SECTION IV.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER—*continued.*

CHAP. iii. 7.

THE Apostle, in the passages which we have lately examined, having set forth the duty of a wife, and the powerful motives by which it is sanctioned, proceeds to show the important claims which she has upon her husband; and these not the less sacred and obligatory from her rarely having means of enforcing them.

LIKEWISE, YE HUSBANDS, DWELL WITH THEM ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE, GIVING HONOUR¹ UNTO

¹ "As construed in our version," says Brown, "the reason given for honouring the wife seems a paradoxical one. It seems reasonable that the Christian husband should honour the Christian wife, because she is equally with himself an 'heir of the grace of life;' but it seems strange that her being the weaker vessel should be assigned as a reason why she should be *honoured*. That is a very good, a very persuasive reason to

THE WIFE, AS UNTO THE WEAKER VESSEL, AND AS BEING HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE ; THAT YOUR PRAYERS BE NOT HINDERED.

sympathize with her, to help her, to be kind to her ; but it does not seem to have much cogency as a reason for honouring her. On looking into the text as it came from the Apostle's pen, there appears no trace of this apparent incongruity. The words translated 'to the wife as the weaker vessel,' and which might with equal propriety be rendered 'with the wife as with the weaker vessel,' immediately follow the words 'dwell according to knowledge,' and precede, instead of following, as from our version we would naturally suppose, the words 'giving honour.' These are plainly intended to qualify the first clause, just as the words 'being heirs of the grace of life' are intended to qualify the second. The wife being the weaker vessel is the reason why the husband should dwell with her according to knowledge, just as her being a fellow-heir of the grace of life is the reason why he should honour her."

I have done justice to the foregoing criticism of the learned professor by thus quoting it in full, and thereby giving the reader opportunity of forming an opinion for himself ; but I hold to the construction of the authorized version, as will be seen in my enlargement on the text ; and I am confirmed in doing so by looking since it was written into Trollope's digest, (*Analecta Theologica*).

No less beautiful than just is the comment of Leighton : "This is that which most strongly binds all these duties on the hearts of husbands and wives, and most strongly indeed binds

The precept might be amplified on this wise:
To you, husbands, I have also, as the inspired am-

their hearts together, and makes them one. If each be reconciled unto God in Christ, and so an heir of life and one with God, then are they truly one in God with each other; and that is the surest and sweetest union that can be. Natural love hath risen very high in some husbands and wives; but the highest of it falls very far short of that which holds in God. Hearts concentrating in Him are most excellently one. That love which is cemented by youth and beauty, when these moulder and decay, as they soon do, fades too. That is somewhat purer, and so more lasting, which holds in a natural or moral harmony of minds; yet these likewise may alter and change by some great accident. But the most refined, the most spiritual, and most indissoluble, is that which is knit with the Highest and Purest Spirit. *And the ignorance or disregard of this is the great cause of so much bitterness or so little sweetness in the life of married persons; because God is left out; because they meet not as one in Him.* Loath will they be to despise one another who are both bought with the precious blood of one Redeemer, and loath to grieve one another. Being in Him brought into peace with God, they will entertain true peace between themselves, and not suffer any thing to disturb it. They have hope to meet one day where there is nothing but perfect concord and peace; they will therefore live as heirs of that life here, and make their present state as like to heaven as they can, and so a pledge and evidence of their title to that inheritance of peace which is there laid up

bassador of Christ, a word of suitable admonition. Let your habitual intercourse with the wife be according to the higher knowledge supplied by the Gospel for guiding the conduct of married persons; disclose not her infirmities or despise her on account of them; it would be unfitting the position assigned you. In bodily frame feebler, in mental constitution more sensitive, she is less adapted for encountering the storms and roughnesses of life. Be it yours, for this very reason, to sustain, protect, and guide her; treat her, therefore, with unchangeable constancy; consult her wishes, delight in her society, afford her all respectful kindness, all gentle

for them. And they will not fail to put one another often in mind of those hopes and that inheritance, and to advance and further each other towards it. Where this is not attended to, it is to little purpose to speak of other rules. Where neither party aspires to this heirship, live they otherwise as they will, there is one common inheritance abiding them, one inheritance of everlasting flames; and as they increase the sin and guiltiness of one another by their irreligious converse, so shall they have cause to curse the time of their coming together as a part of their exercise for ever. But happy those persons in any society of marriage or friendship, who converse so together here as those that shall live eternally together in glory."

and affectionate usage. In her higher interests she is your equal; as your divinely-given associate, a sharer not only in the comforts and privileges of the present life, but a copartner with you in the same gratuity of a heavenly one, a fellow-traveller in the journey towards it; wherefore continually remind each other of these ennobling, animating hopes; incite each other to holy vigilance, enliven each other's faith, kindle mutual devotion; meekly counsel, exhort, and encourage each other onward; as heirs together of the grace of life, fellow-expectants of immortal joys, suffer no indifference or apathy regarding the "ONE THING NEEDFUL," but fully and unreservedly "pour out your hearts," sweetly conversing on the glorious prospect when your earthly course is over, of together dwelling in the "house eternal," the mansion purchased for you by that ADORABLE REDEEMER, "whom not having seen, ye love; and in whom, though now ye see Him not," yet, amidst all your present trials, perplexities, and troubles, and snares, believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, full of present peace and of anticipated glory!

Above all, see that ye unite continually together

in supplication for spiritual blessing and grace so to spend the period of your intimate sojourn here, that ye may be "accounted worthy to obtain that world," wherein though there is "no marrying or giving in marriage," yet shall there pass before you in blissful review the memory of your former ties²; similar

² "If those bonds," says one of our ablest popular writers, "which were broken at death are not restored again in the realms of life, death is not annihilated; one of its deepest wounds survives; its heaviest blow is felt throughout the successive cycles of a futurity to come. But this cannot be. I look on the future as the restoration of scattered families, of suspended friendships, of broken circles; the re-animation of departed images; the apocalypse of faces we gazed upon below when channelled by floods of tears, there bright and radiant with joy, where tears are no more shed!" And after giving several instances from Scripture proving that the saints shall hereafter recognize each other, he observes on the account of the resurrection in 1 Thess. iv., and the Apostle's concluding direction, "Comfort one another with these words,"—"The subject on which comfort is here required, as will be seen from the 13th verse, is the death or removal of beloved friends and relatives. The consolation specially announced is not the resurrection, but the reunion of departed friends, and the restoration of suspended or interrupted intercourse. The Apostle proceeds upon the supposition that the resurrection is an admitted fact; and shows that there will be superadded to that

feelings of affection, purified from their earthly dross, shall possess your glorified spirits, and together shall ye be associated in pure and blissful employments in the service of the Great King.

But in order that your joint devotions be heard and accepted, bear carefully in mind to guard against discord or contention; for this would grieve the Holy Spirit, damp the heavenward fervency, and unfit your souls for becoming mutually tuned together in prayer; and is it not to this sweet concert of souls, to their harmonious union in the holy

resurrection this special consolation, namely, the recognition of our risen friends and relatives. Were some beloved relative, or child, or parent about to depart to a distant land, would it be sufficient comfort to tell you that you also would be carried there in due time, but to a different part of that beautiful land; so that while you would be aware that your beloved ones were on its face, yet you could neither see nor hold communion with them? This would be dispersion, not gathering together. There would be no comfort in this. The real comfort would be the prospect of reunion; and the summons not to sorrow, and the promise that you would be taken there, would all imply the restoration of the fellowship and the recognition of the persons of those you loved below."—*Apocalyptic Sketches, by Rev. John Cumming.*

exercise, that the gracious assurance of your Lord's special presence is afforded³?

“Come hither to me my own beloved,
Come hither and kneel wi' me,
The morn is fu' o' the presence of God,
And I canna kneel without thee!
The Book maun be ta'en when the carle comes hame
Wi' the holy psalmodie,
And I will speak to thee of God,
And thou shalt speak wi' me!”

“There is something peculiarly affecting,” says Dr. James, “in this tender appeal to affection as a motive for the mutual exercise of Christian graces in the regulation of their tempers and dispositions towards each other. Many an impetuous spirit, whom no consideration of self could move to restrain anger and curb temper, bends the proud heart to forgiveness and gentleness and love, rather than risk failure of blessing to those for whose welfare in time and in eternity the soul has been bowed in prayer. So mercifully has He, who was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, provided

³ Matt. xviii. 19.

a remedy for them in the Scriptures, whereby His Spirit would thus enforce their correction! We can all doubtless feel that when parents implore the Divine goodness for themselves or on behalf of their children, it is impossible but the supplication must be sincere. It is equally impossible that sincerity should wilfully place any hindrance between their prayer and its accomplishment. Therefore, though to subdue a feeling of anger, or contempt, or pride, be hard; be like 'cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye,' painful even to agony, yet what parents would not make such a sacrifice for the preservation of their child? If this thought operate with salutary influence upon the mind amid the common events of life, with what added force does it act when any special danger threatens, any darker sorrow saddens; when sickness, or perhaps absence, does but the more endear to each other hearts whom kindred love thus binds? When, for instance, father and mother hang over the sick bed of their child; when their hearts swell nigh to bursting, if they hope *then* that 'their prayers be not hindered,' let them exercise mutual forgiveness of each other's failings, and

exhibit that meek and quiet spirit which is declared to be in GOD's sight of great price.

“The same reasoning is applicable, whatever be the immediate object of their prayers. Thus, is the husband employed in the turmoil of active life, exposed to its perplexities? his temper assailed by injustice, oppression, or fraud, and often rendered unquiet at home by the scenes which have disturbed him abroad? Let a gentle forbearance and deference, as directed by Almighty Wisdom, be rendered unto him by the wife. Nor will the Christian wife be backward thus to exercise that influence which, when blessed of heaven, tends to calm disquiet, soothe sorrow, and triumph over the world. The beneficial effects of such influence are intelligible upon the common principles of our nature. Next to the approbation of his own heart, the husband prizes that of one who has become his second self, and of which he cannot feel deprived without pain and disquiet.

“So the weakness and tenderness of frame which renders the wife unequal to the more arduous bustle of life are assigned by God as the very reason why the husband should *honour* her. Her very

weakness is thus to be her strength. Indeed it is one of the many beautiful instances of a Divine wisdom ordering the constitution of our minds, that in proportion as any object of our affection requires especial care and attention, we are so far from wearying in our work and labour of love, that we are more and more cheerful in it. How else could the wife and mother, often of weak and tender bodily frame, tend with a patience unwearied the sick bed of husband and children? Where love is, labour is delight; and where most care and affection are needed, there the Christian rejoices to bestow it in its fullest measure."

Jeremy Taylor's illustration of the effects of anger in hindering the success of prayer has been quoted frequently; and yet is it of such admirable beauty, such unrivalled magnificence of imagery, and withal so appropriate to our present subject, that without it the Section would be incomplete and destitute of one of its best features:—

"Anger sets the house on fire, and all the spirits are busy up in trouble, and intend propulsion, defence, displeasure, or revenge. It is a short madness, and an eternal enemy to discourse and fair

conversation ; it intends its own object with all the earnestness of perception or activity of design, and a quicker motion of a too warm and distempered blood. It is a fever in the heart, and a calenture in the head, and a fire in the face, and a sword in the hand, and a fury all over ; and therefore can never suffer a man to be in a disposition to pray. For prayer is the peace of the Spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest. Prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts ; it is the daughter of charity and the sister of meekness ; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a direct line to God. For so have I seen the lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, and singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and rise above the clouds ; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sigh-

ings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconsistent, descending more at every breath of the tempest than he could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of its wings, till the poor creature was forced to sit down and pant till the storm was over ; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and motion from an angel as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below."

SECTION V.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS.

ADVANCING onward through the inspired records in our search for notices of married life, we arrive at the letter written by St. Paul, not to a particular Church, but to his convert and fellow-labourer in proclaiming the message of salvation. Titus had been sent with episcopal authority to Crete, the inhabitants of which were addicted to immoral habits; and accordingly, while referring man's salvation wholly to the free mercy of God through Christ, the Apostle urges this as laying us under the strongest obligation to holiness.

In chapter ii. 4 we find these suggestions to Titus respecting the conduct of Christian wives and mothers:—

THAT THEY TEACH THE YOUNG WOMEN TO BE SOBER, TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS, TO LOVE THEIR

CHILDREN, TO BE DISCREET, CHASTE, KEEPERS AT HOME, OBEDIENT TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, THAT THE WORD OF GOD BE NOT BLASPHEMED.

Here are specified various particulars of nuptial and maternal duty. Let us comment briefly on the import of the several expressions.

TO BE SOBER: This, in common acceptation, means moderation in use of fermented liquors; and of the grievous family miseries resulting from intemperance how little conception can be formed! But the term has likewise a further and more elevated signification: it is opposed to the giddiness, the absence of due reflection, which looks not beyond the present moment; it implies the cautious examination of the tendency and consequences of any words or action, the wise vigilance which is contrary to frivolity, vanity, and time-consuming trifling, the holy calmness and pleasing cheerfulness which arises from the "mind being stayed upon God." (Isa. xxvi. 3.)

The "DISCRETION," prudence, sound judgment, next recommended, is akin to the sobriety of mind last mentioned. Such qualities in a wife have already been described, "the heart of her

husband doth safely trust in her¹." (Prov. xxxi.)

The injunction in a former Epistle was to reverence and submit to the husband; here every thing is summed up in the word LOVE. "All happiness in the marriage relation is based on mutual love; when that departs happiness departs. No wealth or splendour in the dwelling, no gorgeousness of equipage or apparel, no magnificence of entertainment, or sweetness of music, and no forms of courtesy and politeness, can be a compensation for the want of affection. Mutual love between a husband and wife will diffuse comfort through the humblest cottage of poverty; the want of it cannot be supplied by all that is furnished in the palaces of the great."

TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN. Heathen parents used to destroy their offspring by exposing them to perish², or even with their own hands cast them into fire to appease an idol deity. It is the blessed object of our holy faith to revive those sweet sym-

¹ See Part i. sec. iii.

² Ps. cvi. 37, 38. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. The practice continues to the present day in China.

pathies of natural affection which had been weakened or annulled by sin, and to raise them to a higher and nobler object. Those Christians on whom have been bestowed that "heritage and gift which cometh of the LORD" are to LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, not with injudicious fondness, unrestraining by timely correction and reproof the evil passions and tempers which so early appear, but with true Christian kindness, reasonably mindful of their temporal interests; but chiefly, and as the grand aim, labouring by precept and example to implant such holy principles and habits as, through redeeming mercy, may prove the means of their joy throughout the boundless ages of eternity.

"O think that unto thee a trust is given
To train that loved one for the bliss of heaven;
That from the moment of that creature's birth
Thou art to him God's delegate on earth;
Yea, more; thou art his priestess, and thy shrine
Is an immortal soul:—perform thy task divine."

This is affectingly urged by a living writer³:
"How are Christian parents bound to watch over

³ Slade.

the offspring they so tenderly love! Watch they do with continual anxiety for all that minister to their comfort and advancement in life; they rejoice in the joy of their children, and weep when their children weep. But oh! how infinitely more important the provision for eternity! Earthly ties will soon be broken; how important to provide for a happy renewal of intercourse and love hereafter! Parting now, to meet no more, were enough to break the heart; but the bright prospect of a reunion in paradise consoles and reconciles, forbidding us to 'sorrow as those who have no hope.' See then, ye Christian parents, to the nurture and training of the olive branches round your table; bestow upon their spiritual well-being an especial and exceeding care: that ye may behold them 'flourishing in the courts of the house of the Lord above,' that whether ye be taken from them or they from you, there may be comfort in the parting."

CHASTE. Not merely an avoiding of gross offences, but perfect purity of mind and heart. "There is a boldness of look, a levity of speech, a freedom of manners, a forwardness of behaviour, a

challenging, obtrusive, advancing air unbecoming the decorum which should mark the character of Christian females. Their behaviour should be such as to awe the licentious and keep them at a distance ; and their language must be free from foolish talking and jesting, which is not suitable to them." Diffidence, the blushing of reserve, retiring modesty, the sensation arising from the union of innocence and danger, the prudence which keeps far from the limits of permission, the instructive vigilance which discerns danger afar off, the caution which never allows the enemy to approach ; all this, which the virtuous matron understands far better than any man can describe to her⁴, is included in the term we are considering.

Brief as is this Epistle, how fully, notwithstanding, does it describe the qualities which become the Christian wife ! She is to be GOOD and a KEEPER AT HOME ; and OBEDIENT TO HER OWN HUSBAND.

The first expression is of extensive signification, comprising all those admirable properties and dis-

⁴ Brown, Jay.

positions which in the various relations of wife, mother, and sister render a female blessed; as bountiful, kind, full of gentle pity and mercy. By requiring her to be a "keeper at home," it is not as a prohibition from ever going abroad, but an inculcating of attention to domestic duties: home is to be the centre around which her influence revolves. Our old English word "housewife" expresses this. Not "wandering about from house to house," as the same Apostle in another place⁵ admonishes, frittering away time in unprofitable kinds of visits, trifling, idle talk, and indelicate prying into the secrets of others.

And what reason is assigned by the sacred writer for such holy and circumspect demeanour in the Christian wife, such heedful regard to the duties of her own sphere and dwelling? This most weighty one: that God's honour might not be injured by the inconsistent conduct of His professed followers; that the worldly, the profane, the unbeliever, might not have cause to speak reproachfully of the religion of Jesus. "Religion is the patron of the domestic

⁵ 1 Tim. v. 13.

virtues ; it regards the appropriate duties in a family as intimately connected with its own progress in the world. It looks benignly on all which makes *home* a place of contentment, intelligence, and peace. It does not flourish where domestic duties are neglected. Whatever may be done abroad ; whatever self-denial and zeal in the cause of religion be evinced there ; whatever call there may be for the labour of Christians there, or how much good soever may be actually done abroad, religion *has gained nothing* on the whole, if, in order to secure these things, the duties of a wife and mother at home have been disregarded. Our first duty is at home, and all other duties will be well performed just in proportion as that is attended to ⁶."

There is a passage in a previous part of the Epistle which probably, in a work like the present, should not be passed by without remark. It occurs in chapter i. 6 (and also in the corresponding Epistle to Timothy), where amongst the qualifications of a Christian pastor is stated "THE HUSBAND OF

⁶ Barnes.

one WIFE.” It has given rise to various conflicting opinions from the early days of the Church; some asserting that a Clergyman *must* be a married man, others that he must not marry a second wife after the death of the first. The former notion is manifestly erroneous; and that the latter is so likewise may be reasonably inferred from the permission given a widow to marry a second husband. The true view is that of a divine who explains it, “one that is not tainted with the common blemish of polygamy; that is, of having more wives at once than one, or, after an unjust repudiation of one wife, marrying another.” Again, it has been observed more at large, “Polygamy had been permitted to the Jews, and was practised by the Eastern nations with indifference. It was therefore to be corrected mildly and gradually, by example rather than by express precept. And seeing every reformation must begin somewhere, it was fit to begin with the ministers of religion, that through the influence of their example the evil might be remedied by disuse, without occasioning those domestic troubles and causeless divorces which necessarily must have ensued, if, by an express

injunction of the Apostles, husbands, immediately on their becoming Christians, had been obliged to put away all their wives except one. Accordingly the example of the clergy, and of such of the brethren as were not married at their conversion, or who were married to only one woman, had in the fourth century effectually rooted out polygamy from the Church⁷."

In an able publication before alluded to on the Life and Epistles of St. Paul, the subject is noticed in this manner: "From the facility of divorce allowed by the Greek and Roman law, it was very common for man and wife to separate, and marry other parties during the life of one another. Thus a man might have three or four wives, or rather, women who had all successively been his wives. An example of the operation of a similar code is unhappily to be found in our own colony of Mauritius: there the French Revolutionary law of divorce has been suffered by the English constitu-

⁷ 1 Cor. vii. 39.

Bp. Hall and Macknight in Bible of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, with notes by D'Oyly and Mant.

tion to remain unrepealed ; and it is not uncommon to meet in society three or four women who all have been the wives of the same man, and three or four men who have been the husbands of the same woman.

“ We believe it is this kind of *successive* polygamy, rather than simultaneous polygamy, which is spoken of as a disqualification for the presbyterate.”

Another writer, in his notes on this Epistle⁸, shrewdly observes of the expression we are considering, “ it is here implied that it was proper that a minister should be married : if it was not, why did not Paul prohibit it ? Instead of saying that it was improper that a bishop should have *more* than one wife, why did he not say that it was improper that he should be married at all ? Would not a Romanist say so now ? ”

⁸ Albert Barnes.

SECTION VI.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

CORINTH¹, the great commercial mart of Europe and Asia, was celebrated no less for its magnificence and wealth than for the learning and refinement of its citizens; and, it must be added, the sad depravity of their morals. Irregularities soon arose in the Christian Church there, which gave rise to this valuable portion of the inspired writings. Amongst several subjects upon which the Apostle's decision has been wished for, one was that of MARRIAGE, and so far as can be gathered, the principal points of inquiry were these:

¹ Not a vestige remains of its ancient grandeur. We learn in "Stephens' Incidents of Travel" that having been repeatedly sacked and plundered during the last revolutionary war, the ruins of Turkish mosques and Christian churches are now lying mingled together in indescribable confusion.

Whether it was proper to enter into the married state?

If it was advisable to continue in that state, exposed as was the Church to persecution; and if one of a married pair became a Christian, should the converted partner separate from the other in consequence?

And lastly, which under present circumstances was most advisable for Christian maidens, a single or a married life?

In chapter vii. he discusses these questions with a delicacy of expression and piety of design which shows the purity of his mind, and how much it was filled with reverential awe. A brief summary will suffice for our present purpose:

For sake of chastity and of escape from evils which otherwise might arise marriage should be entered into. The sacredness of the obligation; the unlawfulness of polygamy and divorce²; the

² There is here an apparent reference to the words of our Lord (Matt. xix. 4. Mark x.), where marriage is brought back to its original institution "He made them *a* male and *a* female." It was a compact between a single pair, and for life; and Jesus authoritatively proclaims that in future divorce was

married not to disoblige, or to withdraw from, each other, unless by mutual consent, for stricter attention to devotion, and even then but for a brief space. Difference in religious views must not cause separation, for the Christian partner, inasmuch as marriage is a holy ordinance, sanctifies the unbelieving one, and the children are not merely legitimate, but admissible to baptism; still further, there is a possibility of the unbeliever being brought by the instrumentality of the other to the knowledge of salvation. In the prospect of impending persecution it is advisable to keep free of any ties which might endanger faithfulness to Christ,

not in the power of either party, unless for a particular offence committed after marriage, in which case the guilty person must not re-marry. The Apostles, upon this withdrawal of former permissions, thought it was most conducive to happiness not to marry at all; but He disapproves of their reasoning, and proceeds to point out that there is no holiness in living unmarried, nor on the other hand any compulsion to marry, but that each person, as judgment and feelings dictated, was free to act. Some, either from natural temperament, calamity, or a desire to serve the cause of religion, might live single, but that ability to do so was a special gift from on high, and that whatever course the Apostles might choose for themselves, no restriction was to be placed on others.

and make the performance of duty a difficult task ; and in circumstances like these “ the Apostle would be understood as permitting marriage rather than commanding it³. ”

His language has by some been strained in order to make a single life holier than a married one ; and yet so far from this being so, he implies conclusively that we should beware of falling into sin through affectation of stricter holiness. Let us compare this chapter with other portions of his writings, and his sentiments will be indisputably manifest ; for instance, in this same Epistle he asserts his own right, on ministerial expeditions, to the society of a Christian wife⁴, as much as any other Apostle who was so accompanied. To the Hebrews he distinctly announces, and that without any qualification or restriction, that marriage is honourable in all persons⁵. Again, if we examine his first Epistle to Timothy⁶, we find him concluding

³ Abp. Sumner.

⁴ Chap. ix. The Rhemish version, in order to escape the consequences, translates this “ a sister, a woman.” What ! would the Apostle in his sacred occupation have conveyed about with him a female to whom he was not married ?

⁵ Heb. xiv. 14.

⁶ 1 Tim. iii.

that in general the clergy will be married men, so he appoints that such shall be limited to one wife; and farther on⁷ is the case of young widows; they are not to get aid from the common fund, or to have superintendence of youthful Christians of their own sex (alluding to arrangements required in the infant Church from the virtual seclusion of females customary in the East); for becoming idle and impatient of restraint, they would re-marry, and thereby evince neglect of their office and want of faith,—a course bringing scandal on the Christian society; but considered abstractedly, was it wrong for them to marry again? far otherwise; for the Apostle counsels them so to do, and to be occupied in domestic duties. Lastly, I shall remind you of the prophetic announcement⁸ so accurately verified in our times respecting *false* teachers in the latter

⁷ 1 Tim. v. 11—15.

⁸ 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. See Trollope's *Analecta* and Barnes in loco. The remarks of the latter are appropriate: "They will depart from the faith through the teaching of those who forbid marriage. This does not necessarily mean that they would prohibit marriage altogether, but that it would be a characteristic of their teaching that *marriage should be forbidden*, whether of one class of persons or many. They would *commend* and *enjoin*

days of the Christian dispensation, one of whose leading characteristics would be their "forbidding marriage," a passage which refers with overwhelming force to the Church of Rome; for the apostacy was to arise under the tyranny of a conscience-cauterized ministry, deluding men by false legends and miracles, and enforcing doctrines which they knew to be contrary to God's written word.

One passage, however, occurs in the writings of another Apostle, which has been supposed to favour a single life, and has given pain to many sensitive minds; it must therefore not be passed over with-

celibacy and virginity. They would regard such a state for certain persons as more holy than the married condition, and would consider it as so holy that they would absolutely prohibit those who wished to be most holy from entering into the relation. The tenth article of the decree of the Council of Trent shows the view of the papacy: 'Whosoever shall say that the married state is to be preferred to a state of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity and celibacy than to be joined in marriage, let him be accursed!' "

I may add the reason assigned for this policy by Father Paul the historian of the Council: "It is plain that married priests will turn their affection to their families, *and by consequence to their home and country, so that the strict dependence of the clergy upon the Apostolic see would cease.*"

out notice : I mean Rev. xiv. 4, where, in setting forth the distinguishing qualities of those who are to share in the heavenly strains of triumph, it is said "these are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins." To remove the erroneous inference from this expression, and the uncomfortable feelings founded thereon, it might suffice to say that most of our learned and pious theologians refer it to Idol-worship, which throughout the Holy Scriptures is styled, in a spiritual sense, fornication. For my own part, however, I lean to the opinion of those who take the words in their plain and literal signification ; and understand thereby that these representatives of the redeemed had kept themselves from impurity, from polluted intercourse of every kind, and were chaste, pure, and holy. The passage has no reference whatever to Married Life, which, so far from being a defilement, is, as we have seen, expressly declared to be HONOURABLE IN ALL.

But to return to the particular portion which at the first we were considering :

1 Cor. vii. 17. The Gospel disturbs not the existing relations of society, but sanctifies and en-

courages the discharge of the duties arising out of them. In these troublous times the man who, in the absence of any wish on her part, or of any contract or engagement, gave not in marriage his maiden daughter or ward, did well; and yet if by acting in such manner he interfered with her personal wishes, he might without impropriety consent to her union. The married state, like all earthly comforts, was accompanied with trouble in outward circumstances, with solicitude and anxiety, especially in a period of persecution; and the Apostle would have a believer in Jesus to be "without carefulness;" free from the perplexity most likely to arise from having a partner not of like mind, for then would a rival affection and a rival interest come into conflict, causing it more difficult to "please the Lord."

These counsels he offers to the Christians at Corinth for their benefit and consolation. He would that every one was as free from disquietude, as able to exercise self-control, when circumstances demanded it, as was himself; not that he would "cast a snare upon them," but only impart profitable and seasonable advice. He desired not to

restrict them in any manner of life which might seem for their happiness, or prescribe absolutely any rule which might be the means of leading them into sin.

Having thus given an epitome of his wise and judicious counsels on these delicate and important matters, his admonition will form a suitable conclusion to this portion of my volume. It directs the believer not to be unduly affected by passing events, and to perform, whilst there be opportunity allowed, his present duties.

BUT THIS I SAY, BRETHREN, THE TIME IS SHORT: IT REMAINETH, THAT BOTH THEY THAT HAVE WIVES BE AS THOUGH THEY HAD NONE; AND THEY THAT WEEP, AS THOUGH THEY WEPT NOT; AND THEY THAT REJOICE, AS THOUGH THEY REJOICED NOT; AND THEY THAT BUY, AS THOUGH THEY POSSESSED NOT; AND THEY THAT USE THIS WORLD, AS NOT ABUSING IT: FOR THE FASHION OF THIS WORLD PASSETH AWAY.

The time is reduced within narrow limits by persecution at present impending; but in any case soon will it silently pass away and be swallowed up in eternity. Revolving therefore in thought how

speedily the present life is hastening to a close⁹, how soon shall be severed the most endearing ties of earth, the Christian should ever retain the feeling of a stranger and pilgrim here; not set his affections too earnestly on the comforts of any relation, allow attachments of this lower world to interfere with duty to God, or to occupy that principal place in the heart which of right belongs to HIM *alone*; be ensnared with idolatrous love of any created thing, or permit its loss to weaken his faith and holy confidence in THE UNCHANGEABLE; for the whole form and fashion of this world is going by as a gilded pageant, and ere long will vanish like a delusive vision! Our temporal trials, our temporal indulgences, will shortly be past,—our day of probation, our opportunity of usefulness over; and the manner in which we have fulfilled our duty, as in our other relations, so also in our married life, should we have engaged in it, shall be the subject of a full and public scrutiny; let us then, with the Divine aid, be diligent in preparing ourselves for the real and everlasting scenes of the

⁹ See Part i. sect. iv. for the admonition of the sage monarch 1000 years before.

existence which is rapidly approaching, in obtaining a growing fitness for associating with that holy company, who, having washed their robes and purified them in the blood of the Lamb, are before the throne of God, and are unceasingly occupied in His service.

“Haste thee on from grace to glory
 Arm'd by Faith, and wing'd by prayer,
 Heaven's eternal day's before thee,
 God's own hand will guide thee there.”

“It were greatly wise,” says an useful female writer, “to keep in view the allusion which gave a pensive tone to the expression of your exulting joy, when, in the solemnity of the nuptial union, you said, ‘*Till death us do part.*’ To do so, not to cast a gloom over your daily intercourse, but to regulate your daily conduct, so that no action or word or feeling shall be encouraged which would add bitterness to the sorrows of the parting hour: and to remind you of the paramount importance of being, each of you, living in holy and habitual preparation for that solemn exchange of worlds; so that each, whichever may first hear the summons ‘the Master is come and calleth for thee,’ may be ready to

reply, 'Amen, even so come Lord Jesus ;' and that the survivor may have no anxious misgivings as to the safety of the departed spirit, no apprehension of an eternal separation, but may be cheered and soothed by the well-grounded confidence that the saint who earliest sleeps in Jesus, and the later sojourner upon earth, will soon meet again, as spirits of the just made perfect, to be for ever with each other and with the Lord. This blissful anticipation can be cherished only by those who, as perishing sinners, have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel, and who experience the Holy Spirit's influence on their souls, working an abhorrence of sin, a desire after holiness, and a constant progress in meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The child long lost, the wife bereaved,
Back to our widow'd arms received,
And all the joys which death did sever,
Given to us again for ever !
O Lamb of God, by sorrow proved,
The friend of man, the Christ beloved ;
To THEE this sweetest hope we owe
Which warms our shivering hearts below !

Kirke White.

Scripture Notices of Married Life.

PART III.

Helps for the Joint Private Devotions of Husband and Wife.

Let our souls
. mingle in one strain
Of deep, full thanksgiving, for God's rich boon,
Our perfect love! Kneel, true wife,
And lay thine hands in mine.

We thank Thee, gracious Lord,
For all its tender memories, tender cares,
Fond words, bright, bright sustaining looks unchanged
Through tears and joy. O Father, most of all
We thank Thee, we bless Thee, for the blissful hope
Through Thy redeeming Son, of union in Thy sight,
And in Thy heavens immortal.—Hear our prayer!

Hemans.

To which are appended

Two Intercessory Forms on behalf of a Relative at
the Seat of War.

TO THE CHRISTIAN HUSBAND AND WIFE.

HAVING perused the foregoing notices of Married Life, you will be capable of appreciating the clear and concise manner in which the truths of Holy Scripture on the subject are summed up in your Book of Common Prayer. Thus, in the opening address of the marriage service, you observe the several particulars which prove the special honour of the relationship in which you are united. It was instituted by God Himself, for He joined together the first wedded pair and blessed them: it is of sublime import, being an earthly representation of the mysterious union between Christ and the Church: and further, when this gracious Redeemer assumed our nature, He sanctified the occasion of the marriage feast by the performance of a most significant¹ miracle, thereby giving testi-

¹ It would be beside my purpose to do more than refer you to Archbishop Whately's Sermon.

mony to the purity of this most intimate of earthly ties, which His Apostle has declared to be honourable in all men.

Next follows the warning that a connexion so responsible and important should not be approached with inconsiderate levity, and irregular desires, but with devout seriousness, and entreaty for heavenly guidance.

The Divine purposes in the hallowed ordinance are then stated: the raising up a legitimate offspring to be trained in the faith and fear of the Lord²; the subjugation of the heart and passions

² Mal. ii. 14, 15. "She is thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. And did not He make one? Yet had He the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That He might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth." In other words, The Lord breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and He possessing the life-giving power inexhaustibly, could have created many women for this one man had He judged right; but He limited to one with the design that a godly posterity should be trained up by joint care of both parents, living together in undivided affection, and uniting their prayers, examples, and instructions for that purpose. The prophet then proceeds to show that polygamy and divorce were

under chaste and sanctified control, and the mutual aid and comfort which two persons thus united might receive from each other.

How sweetly endearing is the bond as spoken of by the Apostles! "HUSBANDS," says St. Paul, "LOVE YOUR WIVES, EVEN AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH. And St. Peter, "BEING HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE."

Upon this last passage the spiritually-minded Leighton observes: "These heirs, if they be alone, they pray alone; and if heirs together and living together, they pray together. . . . And it is not enough that they pray when with the family, but even husband and wife by themselves."

How delightful the interchange of Christian sympathy arising from a habit of this kind is mentioned in Philip Henry's Life, by his son, the pious commentator: "He and his wife prayed constantly together, . . . and from his own experience of the benefit of the practice, he would recommend it to those in that relation, as conducing to the comfort of it, and to their furtherance in helping one alike irreconcilable with this hallowed object, and a deviation from the original institution of marriage.

another on the way to heaven. This sanctifies the relation, and fetcheth a blessing upon it; makes the comfort of it the more sweet, and the crosses of it the more easy, and is an excellent means of preserving and increasing love.”

Testimony of a like nature from others could readily be produced³, and in earlier times the Reformers made it a special object to enforce upon the attention of married persons how “they must crave continually of God the help of His Spirit so to rule their hearts and knit their minds together that they be not dissevered by any discord⁴.”

Within the last few years the practice has been urged by esteemed ministers in the metropolis and other places; and yet, so far as I can learn, there do not exist any forms⁵ for the joint devotion in private of the married pair; I have therefore attempted some helps for their use in this way: my

³ As Bickersteth, Burkitt, Charles of Bala, T. Scott, Hugh White, Bishop Daniel Wilson, &c.

⁴ Homily of the State of Matrimony.

⁵ A tract appeared not many years ago with forms: but very meagre, and approaching to the errors of those described by the Archbishop of Canterbury, as “sitting in the Reformer’s seat, traducing the cause of the Reformation.”

own thoughts were drawn to the subject by an incident in my parochial ministrations which I shall here relate.

A lady was stricken by a serious illness, eventually terminating in death. I found her alone upon one occasion, when she spoke of the anguish experienced by her husband at the prospect of their approaching separation. Knowing them to be attentive to the outward ordinances, I observed, "you should pray with each other in private; it will prove the source of comfort and support." With affecting pathos she replied, "Ah, dear Sir, we were not brought up to do so; Mr. — would not understand it." The circumstances, deeply solemn as they were, failed to the last in overcoming the obstacles interposed by natural reluctance and shrinking timidity; the absence of any forms specially suitable for their joint devotion was a further impediment: and they were parted,—not without expectation of a future meeting,—but there wanted the firm conviction, the spirit-cheering confidence, the "full assurance of Faith, the peace of God," which would have been shed abroad upon their agonized hearts in that time of need, had

they been familiarized, in the unreservedness of private spiritual communion, to waft together their necessities and sorrows towards the heavenly mercy-seat, through the mediation of their sympathizing High Priest.

As the practice should not interfere with, but be accessory to prayer with family and servants, the helps here furnished you are designedly brief, nor are there in them any petitions referring to the Church's seasons, or to incidental occurrences. Respecting these latter I know full well that times arise when the exuberance of joy and thankfulness, or the intensity of mental distress, cannot be conveyed in words, when the soul can hold only silent converse with her God, and the upheaving breast, and the "groanings which cannot be uttered," afford the only manifestations of the feelings which rend or elevate the heart within; and yet if the habit of united private worship be once established in all the unreservedness of your intimate relationship, the spirit of pious affection, unembarrassed by the restraints which attend public extemporaneous prayer, will suggest expressions in some measure suitable to the particular exigence.

HUSBAND AND WIFE! suffer me, with affectionate persuasion, to impress upon you the benefits of thus praying together; you are bound by a close and indissoluble tie of God's own appointment; you are one in His sight; your interests are inseparable; you commune intimately with each other about the things of Time, why not also upon those of Eternity? why shrink from returning thanks together for abounding mercies; entreating a continuance of them, and together deploring your oft broken resolves and repeated failures? Fully am I aware that all the feelings of the soul in confession, aspiration, and petition, cannot be expressed in the presence of any fellow-mortal, however dear: still, the more you learn of the holiness of God, and of your own insufficiency, the more humbly you in concert bewail your infirmities and omissions, and the greater earnestness with which you plead together for the graces of mutual forbearance and kindness, the stronger will be your firmness in resisting those sins which you are thus unitedly wonted to confess in the presence of the Searcher of hearts.

To do this, may at first seem irksome, but cus-

tom will effect a remedy ; pride and false shame will vanish ; and, kneeling together before the throne of grace, you will insensibly become attached by still closer and holier ties : you will be strengthened to feel and to act more consistently, helping one another as fellow-travellers along the rugged path of life, and your hearts will become more powerfully drawn towards your Covenant-GOD as the source and centre of your happiness, looking forward with humble confidence, through the merits of your Redeemer, to a renewal of godly intercourse⁶ in the heavenly courts, where prayer shall cease, and praise shall have her perfect work.

“ O Saviour, Thou that makest marriages in heaven, Thou blessest them from heaven. O Thou, Who hast betrothed us to Thyself in truth and righteousness, do Thou consummate that happy marriage of ours in the highest heavens⁷ ! ”

⁶ See Prayer X., note.

⁷ Bishop Hall, Contemplations.

Jeremy Taylor with his usual eloquence writes, “ That when the work of my life is done, I may rest in the bosom of my Lord, till by the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, I be called to sit down and feast at the marriage Supper of the Lamb.”

May these notices and devotional helps conduce to your joy in the day of Christ's appearing: may the sublime blessing invoked at your union be realized abundantly:—

“God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with His favour look upon you; and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting!”
Amen.

Sweet Edith, let us call on Him,
Let us kneel down as we have knelt so oft.

O look on us,
Father above! in tender mercy look
On us Thy children.
Save, or we perish!

*The English Martyrs in time of Queen
Mary.—Hemans.*

“THE MATRIMONIAL CROWN.”

By DANIEL ROGERS, B.D.

A.D. 1650.

DURING the progress of my volume I had little expectation of meeting with so efficient an ally as is presented in this old quaint author. After urging the benefit of family worship, he proceeds to private joint worship, and gives counsels concerning it with a vigorous and pious earnestness surpassing not only my own feeble power of advocacy, as also that of any arguments which I have met with elsewhere.

“Be mutual in all religious duties, ordinances, and service of God; this will strengthen the wheels of marriage life, whose spokes would otherwise be split and cracked. Live not strangers to God, for so shall you never be inward with each other; your life shall be spent in a shadow and vanity, yea, and vexation of spirit; AND AT YOUR DEATH YOU SHALL SAY THAT YOU NEVER KNEW ONE ANOTHER TRULY. For setness of hours or oftness of duty, I

leave it to your own experience, who should best know one another's wants, or at least your own, to draw you to it. It is not meet families be made privy to the privacy of their governors; it is the way to make them despised. It is best referring them to your own seasons. Let this be the chief pearl of the marriage crown: search out all thy corruptions; make a register of all favours of God, which God hath granted to thee and thy wife in common: such as at the time of receiving seemed most precious, and might least of all be spared: mark how the Lord hath gone before thee and ordered thy conversation; consider together how happily, and yet how hardly, ye met in marriage; what sound love and covenant the Lord bred at first in you; how they have since held firm; consider how your hearts are drawn out daily to each other, and your unquiet spirits calmed, so that you look not upon each other with the eyes of serpents, but of doves.

“Observe how sabbaths and sacraments are blessed; how your faith and peace grow, your fears decay, your corruptions purged; what dangers in body, state, children, you avoid, and what sorrows

which cumber others, you are free from ; what success in your children's tractableness and towardness, what faithfulness and subjection in your servants ; what new blessings are fallen upon you in persons, names, employments, posterity : mark well where Satan insulteth and where the hedge is lowest with you ; what corruptions, as old sores, break out in their seasons, which yet seemed quashed before : what lusts of the heart, lust of the eye or pride of life, bubble up from within. Look not each into him or herself only, but also each into other as having interest deeply planted ; yet do it not with curiosity, but simplicity ; BY THIS MEANS BOTH ABUNDANT MATTER, AS OIL TO THE LAMP, WILL OFFER ITSELF TO NOURISH THE ORDINANCE ; all rust of sloth, rust of ease, all weariness will be filed off. And a free heart will make GOD the umpire of your differences (as a root of bitterness within will less or more break out), the composer of your hearts, the granter of your requests, and the gracer of your marriage.

“And fear not that this course should in time weary you, or alienation, each from other, should grow to distaste this duty : FOR THE LORD WHO

HATH FOUNDED IT WILL OWN IT AND BLESS IT, and the sweet fruit of this service will so prevent, attend, and follow you, that you shall feel yourselves to walk before GOD less loosely, more soundly and safely. For why? How can it otherwise be, when both of you remember to whom you use to go,—in confession, in which you shame yourselves for all your failings; and in your requests, craving pardon and progress; and when you have done well, to praise Him for His support, and to be thankful for that administration and protection of His, under which, as His beloved, you have been all the day long.

“Go then to GOD more jointly than ever; hold and pull more hard and close together as oft as you go to the throne of grace, especially when (as with the good Jacob) you are resolved not to cease wrestling till you be blessed; compel Him to send you away with your request; go by a promise in your Advocate, and say, ‘Lord, this new state of ours requireth new manners, new self-denial, new faith, new life, a double portion of grace.’

“Separate not yourselves in these duties, but say, ‘COME, LET US PRAY TOGETHER, CONFESS, GIVE

THANKS. I AM AS THOU ART; MY THOUGHTS, MY AFFECTIONS, GOODS, MEMBERS, AS THINE.' By this means love shall so grow that it may outgrow all distempers. You shall say of each other, 'I never thought my wife had the tithe of that grace in her heart, or that my husband had half that humbleness, compassion, faith, which I now perceive. Those infirmities which I see in him, in her, which would for ever have estranged some and caused distaste, need so much the more love in my soul, sympathy, and mercy.'

"Thus from this well-spring of joint worship shall flow streams of honey and butter (as Job speaks) unto all the life; especially when crosses and straits shall befall you, THEN SHALL GOD BE NEAREST OF ALL TO YOU, AND BE AFFLICTED WITH YOU; because you have made Him the God of your mountains, He will be the God of your valleys also, when others, who have never thus traded with Him, shall be sent to their idols to shift for themselves."

SECTION I.

HELPS FOR JOINT PRIVATE DEVOTION OF HUSBAND AND WIFE.

A SENTENCE of Holy Scripture is prefixed to each form as a means of solemnizing the mind, and, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, preparing it for the succeeding employment: may you, dear wedded pair, be filled with such grateful love and holy hope, that access to your heavenly Father shall be regarded as a joyful privilege; and whilst the natural, unconverted heart looks upon prayer as a repulsive task, may you, as redeemed sinners and beloved children, approach the mercy-seat, pleading the wondrous promise, "Open thy mouth wide and I shall fill it." "Apply to ME, and I will satisfy your utmost desires; the more full and comprehensive your petition, the more abundantly shall you receive from MY All-sufficiency." Ask then what is for your real happiness¹; ask in believing expectation of

¹ See Address to the Christian husband and wife, p. 126, last sentence.

136 HELPS FOR JOINT PRIVATE DEVOTION

success; ask in the name of JESUS; persevere in humble, yet urgent, entreaty; “knock” at the door of divine mercy, and “it shall be opened unto you.” “Prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, THAT THERE SHALL NOT BE ROOM ENOUGH TO RECEIVE IT²!”

Let your souls,
Snatched by the spirit's power from their cells
Of fleshly thralldom
. boldly spring
Up to the porch of heaven.



I.

PSALM cxxvii. 1.

“Except the Lord build the house,
They labour in vain that build it.”

COME, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire.
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost Thy seven-fold gifts impart.

² Mal. iii. 10.

Thy blessed Unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Keep far our foes, give peace at home :
Where Thou art Guide, no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Thee of both, to be but One.
That, through the ages all along,
This may be our endless song ;

Praise to Thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit³.

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men ; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings ; the remembrance is grievous unto us ; the burden

³ Ordering of Priests and Bishops.

of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father : for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past ; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of Thy Name ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen ⁴.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil : for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

O GOD of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless us Thy servants, and sow the seed of eternal life in our hearts ; that whatsoever in Thy holy Word we shall profitably learn, we may in deed fulfil the same. Look down, O

⁴ Confession in the Communion Service.

Lord, mercifully upon us, and bless us : as Thou didst send Thy blessing upon Abraham and Sarah, to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send Thy blessing upon us Thy servants ; that we obeying Thy will, and always being in safety under Thy protection, may abide in Thy love unto our lives' end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD, save Thy servant and Thine hand-
maid,

Who put their trust in Thee.

Send us help from above,

And evermore mightily defend us.

Help us, O God our Saviour ;

And for the glory of Thy Name be merciful
to us sinners for Thy Name's sake.

O Lord, hear our prayer,

And let our cry come unto Thee.

O ETERNAL God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life, send Thy blessing upon us Thy servants ; that as Isaac and Re-

bekah lived faithfully together, so we may surely keep the vow and covenant betwixt us made, that this man may love his wife according to Thy word (as Christ did love His spouse the Church, who gave Himself for it, loving and cherishing it as His own flesh), and also that this woman may be loving and amiable, faithful and obedient unto her husband; and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, a follower of holy and godly matrons. O Lord, bless us both, and grant us to inherit thy everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



II.

MARK xi. 24.

“ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

To cherish tender love for each other we have solemnly pledged our vows in Thy sight, O Lord :

may we set Thee alway before us as the Blessor and Rewarder of duty, if practised; the Avenger of guilt, if that duty be neglected. We acknowledge that without Thy special grace we cannot walk before Thee as we ought; grant us then, we beseech Thee, that we may live together, not merely in earthly, but in heavenly love, exercising a sacred influence over each other, and having an undivided affection of heart and interest, a perfect harmony of soul. Keep from us all coldness, secrets, or jealousy, or any thing that would diminish our mutual attachment; and when angry temper or difference arises, may each strive to be foremost in sacrificing it on the altar of our common love. May we, like the blessed family of Bethany, have the presence of Jesus amongst us; may He love (each one of our children) each member of our household; and may love to Him influence every heart, inducing an union of object, an unselfishness of purpose, and an entire consistency of character.

All-gracious Lord, Reconciled Father in

Jesus ! may we, by precept and example, help each other on the way to eternal life ; that the tie of holy love in which Thou hast bound us here may be perpetuated in Thy courts above ; that we may be dear intimate friends in heaven ; yea, Lord, if it be not contrary to Thy own all-wise designs, grant that in the new and immortal existence which awaits us, we may be near each other, and see and enjoy each other's blessedness !

These blessings we implore through Jesus Christ, and in faith in His all-prevailing mediation. Amen.

May the grace of Christ our Saviour,
And the Father's boundless love,
With the Holy Spirit's favour,
Rest upon us from above.
Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess in sweet communion
Joys this earth cannot afford !

III.

EZRA ix. 6.

“ O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God : for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is gone up unto the heavens.”

PSALM xxxii. 5, 6.

“ I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
And so Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.
For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee
In a time when Thou mayest be feared.”

WE come into Thy presence, O Lord, to acknowledge that we are not worthy of the least of Thy mercies, and that we have often dishonoured Thee and grieved each other by failing in the duties of that relation to which Thou hast called us. O give us grace, we pray Thee, to discharge them for the future with greater diligence and meekness : enable us to manifest such Christian graces and conduct, that by the influence of our holy example, no less than by our godly precepts, we may induce all connected

with us to seek an interest in Christ Jesus. Preserve us, O Lord, from putting a stumbling-block in their way by any inconsistency. May we pursue our worldly calling, and seek for earthly things in perfect submission to Thy will ; resign ourselves and all that is ours, in faith, to Thy wise disposal. May we be defended from all anxious care, knowing that Thou, in Thy rich mercy, wilt give us grace and glory, and wilt withhold no good thing from us. May we be carried safely through all the trials and troubles of this fleeting scene, leaning daily more closely on the Saviour ; and may we, as a family, no one being lost or missing, inherit Thy eternal kingdom.

O Lord, hear ! O Lord, forgive ! O Lord, hearken and do : for Thine own sake, and for the merits of Thy dear Son. Amen.

IV.

MATT. vii. 7, 8.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

O THOU, who at the first didst provide an help meet for man; who hast hallowed the married state by declaring it a figure of the union of Christ and the Church, behold us now before Thee, imploring Thy blessing, that we may perform with fidelity and affection the several duties which we owe to each other.

May our mutual love be ardent, holy, and enduring; a “love which many waters cannot quench;” which shall prompt us to labour in all kindness and patience to promote not only the temporal, but chiefly the spiritual well-being of each other. In our various domestic cares enable us to comfort and exhort each other, and to maintain order and discipline in our

household. Thou blessest the habitation of the righteous, O bless Thou ours ! In it may the voice of prayer and praise be continually lifted up, and the light of holy example shown. If it please Thee, prosper our plans and undertakings, "our basket and our store," but above all, bless us with Thy choicest spiritual mercies in Christ Jesus. May both our happiness and our holiness be greatly promoted by our union ; dwelling as "heirs together of the grace of life," soothing each other's sorrows, helping each other's joys. In submission to Thy wise disposal, we would ask Thee to permit us to spend many happy years together here ; but whatsoever Thou hast appointed, may we cleave to Thee with full purpose of heart, grow in Thy favour, be guided by Thy counsel, and rejoice in Thee as our portion for ever. We ask in faith and in the name of Jesus. Amen.

V.

JOHN xv. 7.

“ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

THOU, O gracious God, hast united us that we might dwell in love and promote the salvation of each other. We pray Thee that by the power of Thy Spirit, the principle of holiness may be established within us, and that we may be watchful both in temper and conduct, to maintain the purity required of us as the servants of Jesus Christ. We have entered together upon the cares and trials of life ; may we cast all our care upon Thee : and, whilst attending to the duties of the world, may we be preserved from its spirit, from being drawn astray by any of its maxims, or feelings, or dispositions, and be enabled to keep before us that “ the fashion of this world passeth away.”

Help us to banish sin and vanity from our dwelling, and to promote piety and virtue. Con-

trol all we do, or say, or think, that no bitterness, or wrath, or evil temper may have place among us, but that we may live in godly love and harmony. O may we and those who are so dear to us be the objects of Thy care and partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom! Supply all our need according to the riches of Thy love in Jesus: may all Thy dispensations be blessed to us: unite us to each other and to Thyself, and thus fit us to dwell together in Thy glorious presence, and to join the company of Thy Saints in their eternal ascription of praise to Him who hath redeemed us by His blood! Amen.



VI.

NEHEM. i. 11.

“ O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name.”

O ALMIGHTY Lord! sovereign Disposer of all things and of all persons! Thou hast been

pleased to join us in the sacred bonds of marriage : sanctify it to us that we may act in this, and in all circumstances of our life, as becomes the servants of the holy Jesus. Grant us a meek and gentle spirit, a spirit not readily provoked, nor prompt to retain unkind resentments ; that we may love each other with sincere affection, and be faithful and conscientious in discharge of our solemn vows and obligations ; the wife cheerfully yielding to the husband, and complying with his just and reasonable wishes ; the husband treating the wife with honour, prudence, and tenderness. May all our actions be regulated by purity and holiness, equity and sober-mindedness, having ever before us the strict account that we must give. O let us not be conformed to the ungodly customs of the world, or waste our time or possessions in unprofitable amusements, much less in sinful pleasures ; but inspire us with earnest desire, both in our recreations and employments, to please THEE, that in every thing, so far as the action is capable of it, we strive to set forth Thy

glory ! Remove from us all strife, and anger, and discontent, and let true Christian love and peace abide in our hearts ; make us bright examples of holy and blameless conduct. May we bear with each other's infirmities, and so diligently perform our duties in every respect, that when Thou shalt see fit to separate us from each other here, the Holy Spirit the Comforter may support and cheer us with the assurance of an eternal reunion, through the merits of Jesus Christ our only Saviour. Amen.



VII.

2 CHRON. XV. 2.

“ The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him ; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you ; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you.”

BELOVED heavenly Father ! We humbly implore Thy blessing that we may faithfully perform our mutual vows, and live in a holy and

Christian manner according to Thy laws. Enable us by thy Holy Spirit to bear with each other's infirmities, and to love each other with pure, fervent affection, next in degree to that which is due to Thee. Grant us, if it be Thy will, health of body and soundness of understanding, and ability to promote the joy and to alleviate the sorrows of each other. We are about to enter upon the occupations, the duties, and the snares of the day; Lord, we dedicate ourselves to Thee; direct us in all our ways; prosper the work we take in hand; pour upon us the riches of Thy grace, that this our intimate and dear relationship may serve abundantly to our own happiness and comfort, as also to that of all connected with us; but, above all, may it tend to our fitness for a blessed immortality with Thee through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Amen.

VIII.

2 CHRON. xv. 12.

“ And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and all their soul.”

GIVE us grace, O Lord, to offer up together daily our supplications to Thy Divine Majesty. We ask Thy blessing in the name of Jesus; enable us to obtain it in the upright discharge of our duties. Make us whom Thou hast set over this household, to rule it with godly wisdom; here, Lord, may Thy name be continually honoured, and the light of holy example shown. May we, in Thy strength, resist firmly the ungodly customs of this evil world, that neither vice or even idle and trifling habits be admitted; may this our dwelling be a nursery of piety, and those dependent on us receive such instruction that when they enter upon life's trials and temptations, they may not depart from Thy holy laws, but be preserved in safety to the eternal bliss of Thy glorious Presence. May

we be so influenced by Christian unity and love, as to gladly share each other's burdens, and exercise forbearance to each other's weaknesses. May Thy Holy Spirit teach us to follow holiness and peace, and so to serve Thee now that we may obtain thy heavenly promises, even those mansions purchased for His people by the merits and satisfaction of the Redeemer. Amen.

IX.

PSALM v. 2.

“Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God :
for unto Thee will I pray.”

THOU, O Lord, hast of thy fatherly goodness united us together in marriage, that we may live therein as Thou hast appointed us. Sensible of our corrupt nature and of our spiritual wants, we fly to Thy footstool for righteousness and strength; may an unction from the Holy Spirit direct us to ask aright! Grant that we may

walk worthy of our vocation, helping one another in the study and practice of Thy holy Word, mutually yielding to each other, and dwelling in such unity as is suitable in those who have become one flesh. Let us not delight in outward honours or adornments, or in any of the vain pleasures of this world, but may we act as befits a sober-minded Christian pair, looking diligently that no wickedness, no indifference to religion, have place in our habitation, but that all things be ordered according to Thy holy will, and be hallowed by Thy blessing. Whatever opportunities Thou mayest afford us, give us grace and courage and wisdom to improve them to Thy glory, so that by us, and by all pertaining to us, Thou mayest receive due praise and exaltation !

Hear, O Lord, and let these our services be acceptable in Thy sight, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

X.

JER. xxix. 11—13.

“ I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

O LORD God Almighty ! Thou knowest that as husband and wife we have pledged our truth to each other, have taken upon us sacred obligations, and entered into the most endearing of earthly relationships ; for this and all Thy mercies to us Thy unworthy creatures we praise and magnify Thy glorious name ; and we pray Thee to bestow on us abundantly Thy grace, that we may fulfil our respective duties. Knit our hearts together closer day by day, that we may sympathize with each other in the joys and sorrows of life, fellow-citizens of the same eternal inheritance. Holy Spirit ! Convincer of sin, Sanctifier of the soul ! shed abroad in our

hearts the love of Jesus ; make us, as Zacharias and Elisabeth, "righteous before Thee, walking in all Thy commandments and ordinances blameless;" so passing the time of our sojourning here on earth as to be fitted for a blessed eternity in that perfect state of being, wherein, though there is no marrying or giving in marriage, yet the godly intercourse interrupted by death shall be renewed and purified and exalted.

Hear, Lord, and answer us, not for our merits, but according to the multitude of Thine own mercies in Christ Jesus. Amen¹.

¹ "God having accomplished the number of the elect, and the servants of God experiencing no diminution of their number, 'for there shall be no more death,' the institution of marriage shall cease with its necessity; but the endearing ties of relationship which have arisen from it, forming part of that heaven-born charity which never faileth, shall in a purer and holier state of being unite us in closer bonds with each other and with God."—*James, Christian Watchfulness.*

XI.

MATT. vii. 11.

“ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him ? ”

O LORD, we Thy servants are united in the dearest and most intimate of earthly ties ; enable us in Thy strength to conduct ourselves so as to be approved by Thee. We are by nature weak, O give us Thy Holy Spirit, that “ the life which we now live in the flesh may be by faith in Thy Son, who loved us and gave Himself for us ! ” We have lost original righteousness ; O give us the righteousness that is in Him, that we may walk together acceptably before Thee ! Let no unhallowed notions, unsanctified tempers, or evil habits be fostered in us, but let our bodies be the servants of our souls, and let both be wholly Thine. Bless, we pray Thee, our (family and) household ; may they each individually receive the grace they

need ; may our earthly be a type of the heavenly home—of the peace and love that reign amongst Thy saints on high. Strengthen us for trials, if trials be appointed us ; deliver us from temptations, direct us in difficulties, shield us in danger, and enable us daily to feel deeper gratitude and love to Thee. O guide us by Thy counsel ; leave us not to ourselves for a moment ! May we perform every duty ; bear in faith every dispensation ; pass through this wilderness of care leaning upon the gracious and sympathizing Redeemer, and, on account of His meritorious sacrifice, be admitted to dwell together in Thy everlasting joy ! Amen.

~~~~~

## XII.

JAMES i. 5, 6.

“ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.”

WE unite, O Lord ! in seeking Thy blessing.  
May these our prayers inspire us with a calm

and holy influence, producing deadness to the love of this world, and conformity in all things to the example of Jesus Christ. O make Thou our marriage full of spiritual comfort and benefit, and let enlarged views of the union of Jesus with His people, of His favour and sympathy, be unfolded to our minds ! Change our evil nature, that we may live together not only free from strife, but live in the exercise of every Christian affection, mutually helping each other on the path to heaven. O glorious and exalted Saviour, who hast bought us with Thy blood, may our time, our talents, all our faculties, be employed in Thy service ; may we diligently take our part in every labour of love which Thou hast set forth in our day ; and whilst our hands are occupied with the business of this life, may our thoughts be musing, our hearts be fixed, upon Thy second coming, as the centre of all our prospects, plans, and wishes ; and when, dear Lord, the solemn hour of separation from each other arrives, and our hearts within us are desolate, O do Thou illumine the dark valley,

rendering it a passage to heavenly joy ; cheer us with the prospect (sure to Thy faithful followers) of reunion in Thine own Presence, when there shall be no more sin, or death, or sorrow, or parting, and where Thy redeemed ones shall dwell in glory everlastingly !

Hear us, not according to our deserving, but for the sake of Jesus, of Thy own finished work. Amen.



### XIII.

JAMES iv. 6—8.

“ GOD resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to GOD. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to GOD, and He will draw nigh to you.”

O LORD, who hast joined us in the nearest of all relations, give us grace, we intreat Thee, to conduct ourselves in this and every state so as to be approved by Thee. May the husband cherish the wife as his own flesh, treat her not with bitter or unkind usage, but comply with

her reasonable wishes, and give her all honour and tenderness; may she have comfort with him, and never grieve that she has forsaken for him her former ties of kindred. May she cheerfully yield to him in all things which are not opposed to Thy will, and prove by speech and actions her fervent love and respect. O give her a meek and quiet spirit, discreet and modest, attentive to her sphere of duty, a follower of holy and godly matrons. O link us both in faithfulness to Thee as well as to one another; and as we are one flesh, so make us of one heart and of one soul. Sanctify our domestic joys and sorrows; and let our union be cemented by an earnest striving for the spiritual welfare of each other, that so when it be Thy will to sever us here, we may meet, rejoicing together, in those blessed mansions where all who lived in holy love on earth shall enjoy eternal communion with Thee and with each other, through the multitude of Thy mercies in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## XIV.

1 KINGS viii. 28.

“ Have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which Thy servant prayeth before Thee to day.”

MERCIFUL God and Father, who in the beginning didst ordain marriage for the mutual comfort and help of us Thy sinful creatures, we thank Thee for Thy goodness in uniting us together in the close and tender bonds of husband and wife. Assist us, we beseech Thee, to live together as fellow-heirs of the grace of life. O may we love each other according to that divine pattern set before us in Thy Word, the husband loving the wife as Christ loved the Church, and the wife being subject in every thing to her husband, as the Church is subject to Christ ! Help us in all things to seek each other's best good, and daily to watch over each other for our mutual edification and growth in

grace. Suffer neither of us to be a hindrance to the other in the way of life; may we each always be mutually helpful to the other's soul's welfare. Give us grace to fulfil all our family duties, so that our whole household may be brought up in Thy faith and fear. We desire wisdom and grace of Thee, that we may dwell together in knowledge, in tender and constant love, bearing each other's infirmities, strengthening each other's graces, delighting in each other's society, and attaining all that full blessedness which Thou in the riches of Thy love didst purpose for us. [Help us especially to train up our children in the way they should go, commanding them to keep the way of the Lord, continually instructing them in Thy truth. Let Thy mighty grace not only assist us in teaching, but so prosper our efforts that the seed sown may have an abundant increase, and all our children may be blessed themselves, rise up and call us blessed, and be an increasing means of good to all around them.] Make us also a full blessing to all dependent upon us. Grant that

our household may ever be ordered according to the Gospel of Christ, and His name may in all things be glorified by us and all connected with us. Hear us, for the Redeemer's sake ! Amen <sup>5</sup>.



## XV.

*In affluent Circumstances.*—1 Chron. xxix. 14.

JER. ix. 23, 24.

“ Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches : but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth ME.”

PSALM lxii. 10.

“ If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.”

LORD Jesus ! Thou hast condescended to be represented in the persons of the poor. Let us, remembering ourselves to be Thy stewards, be

<sup>5</sup> Having met with this form in the late Mr. Bickersteth's works, just as my volume was coming to a close, I insert it here.

rich in good works, ready to distribute to those who are in want, "stretching out our hands" cheerfully to the needy. Grant us an humble mind, and let us not trust in uncertain riches, but in Thee who givest so richly to enjoy Thy bounty, diligently seeking in Thy strength to become fitted for the heavenly bliss purchased by Thy atoning sacrifice. Amen.

---

## XVI.

LUKE xvi. 9.

"Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness."

PROV. xix. 17.

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again <sup>6</sup>."

BOUNTEOUS Source of all good things! let not the abundance with which Thou hast entrusted

<sup>6</sup> Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, affirmed "there was more rhetoric, more persuasive argument in this short sentence than in a whole library."

us be a snare to the soul, choke Thy grace, or damp our zeal in Thy service. Dispose us to spend it not in vain and selfish pleasures, but in the setting forth Thy glory. Let us not be proud of our worldly possessions, but count all things refuse so that we may win Christ, and bring forth works of righteousness as the fruit of faith in Him. Clothe us with humility; make us earnest in offices of love, rightly using the perishable and deceitful mammon, and thus seeking for glory and immortality, that when our heart and flesh fail we may be accounted worthy of those riches which are Thy munificent gift in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## XVII.

*Perplexity of Worldly Affairs.*—Matt. x. 30. Ps. lvii. 7.

HAB. iii. 17, 18.

“ Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat ; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls : yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the GOD of my salvation.”

ISA. xxxviii. 14.

“ Lord, I am oppressed ; undertake for me.”

THOU hast in Thy tender mercy, O Lord, permitted us now many years to dwell with each other in the dear and attached circumstances of married life ; for this and for all the privileges and the blessings which Thou hast vouchsafed us we magnify Thy holy name. Pardon, for thy dear Son's sake, the numerous instances in which we have not fulfilled as we ought our respective duties according to Thy written word. O Thou who canst do above what we can ask or think, give us grace to aid each other in working out our salvation ; make us more spi-

ritually-minded, honouring Thee in all events. If, Lord, it is not presumptuous, and that Thou the All-wise seest it not injurious to us, or that it be not contrary to Thy will, we would now supplicate Thee to permit us many holy years together on earth, increasing in spiritual-mindedness and usefulness to Thee.

Lord, we are troubled with many cares ; and we come entreating Thee, with humble submission, to settle our temporal affairs, and to grant us such portion of the perishable mammon as will provide for our necessities, and enable us to wait on Thy service without distracting and agitating thoughts. Defend us from all distrust, so that we may commit ourselves and all that is ours in loving faith and filial confidence to Thee. Hear, forgive, and do, for Jesus' sake<sup>7</sup>.

Give what Thou wilt, without Thee we are poor,  
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.

---

<sup>7</sup> " There is as much difference between the sufferings of the saints and those of the ungodly, as between the cords with which an executioner pinions a condemned malefactor and the bandages with which a surgeon binds his patient."—*Wall*.

## XVIII.

*Temporal Circumstances in an unsettled Condition.*—1 Pet. v. 7.

PROV. xx. 7.

“ His children are blessed after him.”

JER. xlix. 11.

“ Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me.”

WITH the confidence of faith in Thy blessed promises and in meek submission to Thy will, O heavenly Father, would we spread our anxieties and troubles before Thee. Continue to us, we pray Thee, a suitable maintenance in the position wherein Thou hast placed us. Keep us from debt and from injudicious expense ; bless our management, that living under our income, we have to give to thy poorer members. May wise plans be so timely adopted, that when Thou seest fit to remove the husband and father, such competency may remain for the survivors as is needed for their comfortable passage through this life, and will not interfere with their eternal

interests. Holy, holy, holy Lord ! THY WILL BE DONE ! Our main desire, our chief entreaty is, that each of us, and of those whom Thou hast given us, may know and love Thee, and serve Thee. Give such firm and filial confidence, O Lord ! as may uphold and cheer us in all events. Enable us to resist temptation. O Jesus ! may the love which Thou hast evinced towards us lost creatures, in purchasing re-admission to the divine favour and heavenly joy, be the comfort and stay of our souls, and compel our hearts to a grateful response, so that we may live to Thy glory !

Holy Spirit ! set Thy seal upon us, that connected here by the ties of earthly kindred, we may each be united in the closer and more lasting bonds of heavenly affection. May each of us be a monument of Thy mercy here, and, no one of us being lost or missing, a partaker of the bliss of those who shall see God face to face, and praise Thee eternally !

We have taken upon us to speak unto the Lord, who are but dust and ashes ; yet hear,

answer, and bless us and ours for the worthiness  
of our prevailing Intercessor and Advocate!  
Amen<sup>8</sup>.

---

In the furnace God may prove thee,  
Thence to bring thee forth more bright,  
But can never cease to love thee,  
Thou art precious in His sight.

---

<sup>8</sup> "I happened to hear him at prayer; my soul seemed on fire within me to hear the man address God so like a friend, and yet with so much gravity and reverence; and also to hear him in the course of his prayer insisting on the promises contained in the Psalms, as if he were sure his petitions would be granted."—*Account of Luther's private Devotions. Milner's Church History.*

## SECTION II.

### INTERCESSIONS ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN.

---

“ Labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”—*Col. iv. 12.*

“ As a house, altar, or temple, newly built and not profaned, is fitted by certain rites and sacrifices for its future use ; so a child, as a newly-formed edifice, is fitted by a certain course for the service of the Church, and his heart is made meet as an habitation of God through the Spirit.”—*Geier.*

For my own children, says a pious parent, I desire not to prescribe how or where they shall serve God ; whether it shall be at home or at the ends of the earth ; as public or private characters. BUT THAT THEY MAY BE HIS SERVANTS—THIS ONE HOPE I WOULD PRESS TO MY BOSOM TILL I DIE.

I.

PSALM cxxvii. 3.

“ Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD :  
And the fruit of the womb is His reward.”

O THOU good “ Shepherd, who gatherest the lambs with Thy arm,” hear our supplications on behalf of the children whom Thou hast given us ; enlighten their minds, convince them of their sinfulness, and of their great need of the righteousness that is in Thee. They have been dedicated to Thee ; suffer not the good seed which has been sown in their hearts to be choked with the cares or the pleasures of this life. Grant to each of them a spirit of prayer and watchfulness to strengthen them against all seductions and snares ; may they maintain a blameless conduct before man and a holy walk with God, be Thy faithful soldiers and servants ; and at Thy coming may the soul-delighting privilege be ours of presenting them to Thee in

grateful adoration, and saying, Behold us, and the children whom Thou hast given us ! Amen.

---

Mother, to thy heart are given  
Rich and precious gifts from heaven ;  
Souls for thee to guide and cherish ;  
Teach that so they may not perish.  
Hearts and hands to train untiring,  
For work that God is now requiring.

---

## II.

ISA. liv. 13.

“ All thy children shall be taught of the Lord ; and great shall be the peace of thy children.”

THOU hast showed us, O gracious Lord and Saviour, that the intercessions of a parent prevail with Thee. Implant, we beseech Thee, in the hearts of our children due honour and affection towards us ; and as they are Thine in profession, may they imitate Thee, who, when dwelling here below in our nature, wast obedient to Thy earthly parents. Grant that by

precept and example we may bring them up in the path that leadeth to life eternal. Endue them with such love to us, that they may comfort and succour us, as we in their tender age have nourished them; but above all, may they honour Thee, their Saviour God. Bestow upon each of them, according to their several necessities, the abundance of Thy grace, and, when their course is run, receive them into heavenly glory, for the merits of Thine own finished work! Amen.

---

She asks no splendour to adorn his way  
That mock the grasp and glitter to betray;  
The hopes she wakens mingle with the sky,  
And light with heavenly ray his destiny.  
Her voice his early orison shall teach,  
And wake devotion with the lisp of speech.  
THAT DAWN IS HERS, so transient and so fair;  
It is her own, and all that she may claim,  
YET SHALL IT BEAR THROUGH LIFE HER SACRED AIM.  
*Rutherford.*

## III.

1 SAM. xii. 23.

“ God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you : but I will teach you the good and the right way.”

THOU hast committed to our charge, O Lord, immortal spirits ; grant us in Thy might faithfully to fulfil our parental duties towards them ; may we train them up for Thee, in Thy knowledge and filial fear, and may our exertions be crowned with the fulness of Thy blessing upon themselves and upon us ; set them apart for Thyself, very early may they hear Thy voice and follow Thee. We ask not for them the riches or honours of this world, yet give them, we pray Thee, such measure of earthly things as may not be hurtful to the interests of their souls ; but beyond all, give them, we earnestly implore Thee, wisdom and grace, that they may love and serve Thee in their day and generation, and with us be of the number of Thy redeemed when Thou “ makest up Thy jewels.”

O hear us, and do for us more than we know  
to ask, for the all-prevailing merits of Christ  
Jesus ! Amen.

---

Father, I pray Thee not  
For earthly treasure to that most beloved,  
Fame, fortune, power ; oh ! be his spirit proved  
By these or by their absence, at Thy will !  
But let Thy peace be wedded to his lot.

\* \* \* \*

LET SUCH A SENSE OF THEE  
THY WATCHING PRESENCE, THY SUSTAINING LOVE,  
His bosom guest inalienably be.

*Hemans.*



#### IV.

GEN. xviii. 19.

“ He will command his children and his household after him,  
and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and  
judgment.”

WE make our humble supplication unto Thee,  
O Lord, on behalf of the children whom Thou  
hast bestowed upon us ; and we pray Thee to

enrich them from their early years with Thy heavenly blessing. They have been admitted into covenant with Thee ; may they be daily renewed by Thy Holy Spirit ! Lord, speak Thou life to their souls, and whatever else they need, let them not be without Thy favour. In all circumstances and conditions of their lives let them look up to Thee, and do Thou mercifully provide for them in such way as may most tend to Thy glory and to their own salvation. Shouldst Thou think fit to call any of them from this world before us, let nothing be wanting to make their departure safe and joyful ; and make us willing to give them back to Thee : or shouldst Thou remove us from them, be Thou more to them than earthly parents. Keep them from the snares and temptations of their spiritual enemies, and conduct them safely. Grant to each such a competent portion of temporal substance as Thou shalt see not to prove hurtful ; but, above all, grant to each of them the love of Thee their God and Saviour, and such a well-grounded confidence in Thy mercy and

goodness as may support them in all dangers, and carry them triumphantly over all temptations, through Jesus Christ. Amen.



## V.

GEN. xvii. 18.

“ O that Ishmael might live before Thee !”

MAKE us, O Lord, kind and tender parents. Let Thy Holy Spirit enable us to form in the minds of our children the principles of piety, and to bring them up in Thy love and fear ; let us make it our constant care to wean them from pride and vanity, and so set before them in ourselves the example of a religious life ; let Thy mighty influence root out of their hearts all sinful desires, and, instead thereof, do Thou sow the incorruptible seed of Thy grace, that they may each lead a life of holiness and virtue. Defend them, we beseech Thee, against all the dangers and temptations of the world : May

they never be led by the evil customs and maxims and examples of it, but be willing and courageous to suffer ridicule for Thy sake, and striving to be Thy faithful servants and instruments for Thy glory in their generation, may attain Thy promises ; and, no one being missing, meet us in joy to unite in our everlasting song of praise. We ask in the name and mediation of our great and only Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.



## VI.

PSALM cii. 28.

“ The children of Thy servants shall continue,  
And their seed shall be established before Thee.”

“ BLESS our children with healthful bodies, with good understandings, with the graces and gifts of Thy Spirit, sweet dispositions, and holy habits, and sanctify them and their bodies and souls

and spirits, and keep them unblameable to the coming of the Lord Jesus <sup>1</sup>." Amen.

---

I give thee to thy God, the God who gave thee  
A well-spring of deep gladness to my heart,  
\* \* \* \* \*  
And thou shalt be His child.

*Hemans.*

---

"It was suggested by one of the parents to the other, We have seven children, would it not be well to take them according to their ages, and make each the subject of special prayer on the seven successive days of the week? The suggestion was adopted; and independently of all the other blessings attendant on prayer, it was found greatly to promote their love to their children and to each other. It brought statedly and directly into view

<sup>1</sup> Having seen this form in Jeremy Taylor (Holy Living), I am induced by its comprehensive brevity to insert it in these pages. It seems founded on St. Paul's prayer for the Church at Thessalonica in his first Epistle, which has been observed to breathe a peculiar spirit of paternal love and affection.

the particular disposition, capacity, and temper of each child ; and while each, perhaps, had faults that occasioned trouble, and were in danger of provoking impatience, each had some redeeming qualities also. When these were specially acknowledged with thanksgiving as the gifts of God, it counteracted that tendency to forget or overlook them, of which many a parent cannot but be conscious, amidst the noise and turmoil of many children. Their faults, on the other hand, recollected at the throne of Divine mercy, inspired grief and compassion instead of anger or irritation ; and while they were humbly confessed *as being only features of resemblance to the sinful parents themselves*, the warmest gratitude was called into exercise for that inestimable grace which had provided for the restoration of their fallen nature. While this was naturally connected with earnest desire to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” it also habituated the mind to look on each child as an object of redeeming love—such a child as the Saviour when on earth would have ‘suffered to come unto Him ;’ and many an *expression of impatience, many a rising cloud of passion, was dispelled and checked by the*

*remembrance of what had been thus realized in presenting the case of that child to GOD!"*

After these "Helps" were composed, I met with the above in an anonymous author, with whom I cordially agree on the subject. Forms adapted to the purpose could not well be supplied; but I may suggest that petitions suitable can be inserted by the parents themselves in course of using those given in this manual.



## APPENDIX.

---

### PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF ABSENT RELATIVES OR FRIENDS AT THE SEAT OF WAR.

ALMOST every family has at this period either one of its members, or at least some dear friend, at the seat of war, and necessarily exposed to dangers and privations: it cannot be irrelevant, though not immediately connected with the object of the volume, to subjoin these forms of intercession on behalf of the loved absent one.

The first form is compiled from the daily and occasional services in the Book of Common Prayer, and is suitable for a family; the second, perhaps, more adapted for private use.

---

And a woman's fond adieu was heard,  
Though deep, yet brief and low :  
" In the vigil,—in the conflict,—love,  
My prayer shall with thee go !"

There were saddened hearts in a darkened home  
When the brave had left their bower ;  
But THE STRENGTH OF PRAYER AND SACRIFICE  
Was with them in that hour.

*Hemans.*

~~~~~  
PSALM cxii. 7.

“ He shall not be afraid of evil tidings ;
His heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.”

WE humbly beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully to look upon our infirmities ; and, for the glory of Thy name, turn from us all those evils that we most righteously have deserved ; and grant that in all troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in Thy mercy, and evermore serve Thee in holiness and pureness of living to Thy honour and glory ; through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD, save Thy servant, our —,
Who putteth his trust in Thee.
Send him help from Thy holy place,
And evermore mightily defend him.

Let the enemy have no advantage over him,
Nor the wicked approach to hurt him.
Give peace in our time, O Lord ;
Because there is none other that fighteth for
us, but only Thou, O Lord.

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men ; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church ; that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.

Grant that the course of this world may be ordered to Thy glory, the advancement of Thy Gospel, the honour of our sovereign, and the good of all mankind. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness our sailors and soldiers, and especially our beloved — ; that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them accord-

ing to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake.

But ills of every shape and every name
Transform'd to blessings, miss their cruel aim,
And every moment's calm that soothes the breast
Is given in earnest of eternal rest.

Cowper.

JONAH ii. 7.

“When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord:
and my prayer came in unto Him.”

HEB. iv. 15, 16.

“For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

O ALMIGHTY God and heavenly Father! Thou hast been pleased to remove to a distant country him whom I love as my own soul, and Thou knowest the dangers and privations to which he

is daily exposed. I fly to Thee, and in humble faith entreat Thee to support him in his arduous duties ; defend him from the “sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day ;” nerve his arm, cheer his spirit, avert from him the missile, “cover his head in the day of battle.” In Thy holy Word Thou hast told us, “Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver Thee.” In deep earnestness of soul I plead Thine own promise ; yet alas ! O Lord, I have not in my prosperity been thankful, nor “paid the vows which I made !” With deep humility I acknowledge that great is my sinfulness, and that justly do I deserve Thine anger. O deal with me not according to my deservings, but according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies in Christ Jesus ! If, Lord, my loved one be wounded or injured, let him have seasonable opportunity of comfort and remedies, and bless Thou them to his restoration ; let a sense of his weakness add strength to his faith and seriousness to his repentance ; let his entire, his only hope be in the merits and atonement of the Redeemer ;

and let Thy consolations from on high refresh and animate his drooping heart.

O Jesus, sympathizing High Priest ! who in “all the afflictions of Thy people art afflicted” with them, take Thou charge of my beloved ! Let him not be disquieted, for Thou art with him. Even should it be in the counsels of unsearchable Wisdom that he be called upon to pass through the dark valley, let “the lamp of Thy love be his guide ;” let faith dispel all fear or doubt or dismay, so that he may joyfully resign his soul to Thee ; and may the knowledge of pardon and acceptance brighten the path, making a joyful passage to heaven.

Holy Spirit, blessed Comforter ! banish from me all fears arising from distrust and weakness of faith ; let me not foolishly and sinfully indulge any anticipations of evil ; and though I know not, to myself or to others, what a day may bring forth, yet let my mind be in calm and perfect peace, because stayed on Thee. May I and my beloved one repose in full confidence on Thy all-sufficiency, Thy tender compassion.

Let mutual prayer for each other bring us daily before Thee. And oh, Thou eternal and all-glorious Godhead ! if it be not opposed to Thy own wise and righteous counsels, restore again my beloved one, I beseech Thee, to his home ; and grant that we, under a deeper sense of Thy manifold mercies, may more watchfully and faithfully contend against the enemies of our salvation, and live to the setting forth the praises of Thee who hast dealt so graciously with us. Amen.

Though gathering sorrows swell my breast,
Speak but the word, and peace and rest
Shall set my troubled spirit free
In sweet communion, Lord, with THEE.

Bp. Jebb.

. . . . his country's voice had call'd
The ardent youth to fields of honour far
Beyond the wave.
O had he seen her thus alone,
Thus holy, wrestling thus, and all for him !

Course of Time.

THE END.

LONDON :
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Nov. 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

BOUND BY
ENDS & REMNANTS
LONDON

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 051 930 9

